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CHRISTIAN IDEAL

By William E. Wilson

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No. VI.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

A STUDY OF THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

WILLIAM E. WILSON, B.D.

Author of *The Foundations of Peace, Atonement and Non-Resistance, Christ and War*, &c.

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BOOK

PREFACE

MORALITY has in the past depended far too much on negatives. "Thou shalt not" is the monotonous refrain of every code of laws. This is not inspiring. Nor is it fully Christian. What we need is rather an ideal to live for; and we require, not so much commands, whether positive or negative, as a clear demonstration of that sort of conduct which will make for the ideal. This Jesus Christ gives us. I have therefore endeavoured in this book shortly to set forth what I conceive to be the Christian Ideal as the Aim of Mankind, and some of the most important means that should be taken for its achievement. Needless to say, the whole ground has not been covered. Suggestiveness and stimulation of thought has been my object rather than exhaustiveness. Nor did it seem necessary to reiterate much that is generally accepted, but rather to deal with questions whose importance has not been realised, or

to which, as it seems to me, wrong answers have been given.

The endeavour has been in each chapter to show the congruence of means suggested with end to be attained; to confirm this, where possible, by the facts of life, and to show how the teaching of Jesus points in the same direction. Throughout I have endeavoured to set down, as clearly as possible, what study and thought have led me to regard as truly Christian. That it is sometimes directly contrary to generally accepted standards does not, in view of the present state of the world, prove it false. For that state is not desirable, nor has it been reached by means of the methods herein set forth. The real question for Christians is, are the methods suggested in harmony with the work and teaching of Jesus Christ? And the question for practical people is, can we see ground for supposing that such methods would work for the general good if people energetically tried them? That there is ground in the New Testament for an affirmative answer to the first question few will deny; and I hope that the following chapters

show reason for "yes" being the answer to the second question too. This ought to surprise no real believer in Christ. For He could scarcely be both the Son of God and a teacher of impractical ethics!

I have received many valuable suggestions from three friends who were kind enough to read the book in manuscript, Dr. Henry T. Hodgkin, the Rev. W. Fearon Halliday, and the Rev. Nathaniel Micklem, the Editor of this Series. To these I tender my most cordial thanks. They have helped to make it better than it would otherwise have been, but they are not responsible for its defects, for which the author must accept sole responsibility.

WILLIAM E. WILSON.

July, 1919.

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I

THE AIM : LIFE

THE earliest name for the religion of Jesus Christ was the Way. This word implies both direction and method. There is some goal to which those who take the Way are going ; and there is a track which they must follow if they hope to reach the goal. We shall be concerned in the following chapters with some of the chief marks of the path. In this chapter we must first of all fix our eyes upon the aim. For unless we have some idea of the goal of our journey we are unlikely to find the way. And unless we gain the right way we shall not arrive at the goal. Both aim and method are essential parts of the Christian Ideal. Unless both are right that Ideal will not be attained.

What then is the aim of Christianity? Probably the truest answer to this question is to say that it is *Life*. This looks like defining in a circle, for it is equivalent to saying that the purpose of life is life. Yet every other statement is less satisfactory in one way or another. Happiness, pleasure, power, development, and the other aims

which thinkers have suggested, are either false definitions or are other ways of stating the aim as life. It is such happiness as lasts, such pleasure as propagates itself, such power as leads to increase of life, and such alone, that are really good. And if the answer is given that the aim of man is to serve and glorify God (an undoubtedly true answer), we have still to inquire what God's glory is, and how we ought to serve Him. And the answer can only be given in terms of life.

The conception of life carries with it the idea of full development of all the powers bodily, mental and spiritual. To define life is very difficult. We see it in its effects. Scientists used to regard life as a form of energy, but at the present day they more often say they do not know what it is. It is not energy, but it directs it. Life shows itself in spontaniety. Life can start action. It is never merely passive. Wherever there is life there is change, development and alteration. Life never simply stands still. It is in constant change. It progresses or it degenerates. Life acts upon its environment; it uses the things with which it is surrounded for its own increase. That the Christian Ideal may be set forth as life shows that it is no rigid and fixed order, but it is something always moving. It has been the fault of most Utopias that they have no room for change. But the very conception of the

Christian Ideal as life shows that it has change as an essential part of it. Yet this does not mean unreckonableness or fickleness; nor does it imply a changing ideal; nor that the ideal is a mere fitting to circumstances, a sort of religious opportunism. The principles upon which the true life is based and even the main lines of their application are always the same. For life does not only imply change, it implies also continuity, which is as characteristic of it as is change. The joy of life and its charm depend to a large extent on the combination of change and continuity.

This combination of change and continuity is called "evolution." And when evolution is going in such a way that life becomes greater, richer and intenser, we call it "progress." In the stage of life which we are considering, human society, progress only takes place in so far as people adopt an aim and turn their attention to achieving it. This always requires effort; first in gaining and keeping a clear conception of what the aim is, and secondly in struggling to overcome the difficulties which lie in the way of its achievement. Effort and struggle are then always present in life that is progressing. And seeing that the deepest satisfactions in life are never experienced apart from them, we seem compelled to assume that effort and struggle will be present even in

an ideal state; that in fact *the ideal state will not be a static condition, but a state of progress*. This will be referred to again in a later chapter,* but here one or two important points must be insisted upon.

A life that was satisfied without effort and struggle, would only know the satisfaction of feeling. For mind and will cannot experience satisfaction except as they act. But even the satisfaction of feeling would not be the highest order of æsthetic satisfaction. That cannot be experienced apart from creation. The man who expresses himself by producing what is good, true and beautiful, experiences the deepest satisfaction. Life without creative activity would lack the greatest and most God-like of satisfactions. This means that *perfection itself is progressive and a matter of effort*. But in effort an struggle, as we know them, elements are often present which we have every reason to suppose have no part in the perfect life. The chief of these are baulked effort, which brings pain, and that struggle which degenerates into strife. For the effort, which in a perfect environment is put forward in the direction of the true ideal, must be successful, and therefore produces satisfaction, and never pain. And struggle in the perfect state cannot be against other men, but must be essentially co-operative; for the true abundant

* Chapter IX. p. 191.

Life is a life of the closest inter-relation with other personalities, and cannot be realised apart from mutual love, and without harmonious co-operation.

But if this abundant life requiring effort is the aim, it is obvious that as long as life is conditioned by material things, bodily health is an essential part of the aim. Often the Christian Ideal has been thoroughly misrepresented by allowing it to be thought, either that the health of the body was of no account, or that it absolutely stood in the way of spiritual life. But, though the body is not the most important part of us, it does not follow that it ought to be neglected. It is, other things being equal, harder for a person of weak and sickly health to rise to the unselfish requirements of a truly Christian Ideal than it is for one in normal health. How much harm has been done in the world by well-intentioned people suffering from indigestion, and therefore taking a crooked view of everything! That bodily health is a part of the Christian Ideal of life is plainly written on the face of the Gospel narrative which is full of works of healing wrought by Jesus. If bodily health had been a matter of little moment to Him, there seems to be no reason why He should so often have healed diseases. Would not He rather have told the sufferers, as Christian teachers often do, that disease was God's

chastening to be unmurmuringly borne? But He never even asserted that. And at least once He asserted that the source of suffering was Satan.

But bodily health, while important, is merely the scaffolding for the higher life which will one day continue to exist apart from the present body. Scaffolding is no longer needed when the building within is complete. But a builder who, arguing from that, was content with insufficient or rickety scaffolding, would be regarded, and rightly regarded, as incompetent. So the cultivation of Life requires at the present stage care for the body, but it is something greater than mere cultivation of the body. When all the needs of the latter are supplied, the man is still unsatisfied. The mind, and the social and spiritual sides still remain. These are developed by the interaction of personality upon personality. No man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself. Everyone has an effect upon other people. The mind and understanding ought to grow; the ideas of social duty and responsibility should expand; the soul must come into touch with God; and thus all-round development takes place. Man as a body seems separate from his fellows, and in part is so, yet the body is dependent upon its surroundings. With the higher side of man this dependence is greatly increased. Mental and

spiritual development is unthinkable apart from communion with other spirits. And Life as the Christian Aim is more than an individual thing. It implies human inter-relationships, and above all it implies a relationship to God. In fact this last is its very essence. God is the source of all life. But that abundant, spiritual, eternal life, spoken of in the Fourth Gospel, is always regarded as particularly His gift, not because it is more dependent upon Him than is the natural life, but because it is consciously received, and is a life of conscious dependence upon Him. Abundant, or perfect life then, in the highest meaning of the terms, is above all a constantly developing perfection of communion with God.

And this means that, while life as we know it, is limited by bodily conditions, and expresses itself by physical means, such a limitation is not a final necessity to life, but rather a temporary condition imposed by the material environment with which, at the present stage of development, life must interact. But because life is in its nature interaction with its environment, there can be no necessity to suppose that it can only exist under physical conditions. For our environment is not only material. Our interaction with our fellowmen, though mainly taking place through physical means, is not a merely physical matter. Its purposes are

often mental and spiritual, and the enjoyment that we gain from it can scarcely ever be entirely reduced to physical terms. Such simple matters as expression of face, tone of voice, and gesture, though they take place in the body, are not susceptible of merely material explanation. They are expressions of spirit, and they are called forth by spirit.

Thus too, the very fact that in our bodily existence we can come into contact with God, and that we can have communication with Him, gain guidance from Him, and know something of His power carrying us through the difficulties and struggles of life, is a promise that even when this body is worn out, and life has gone from it, the true life of the spirit will continue. For the division which we make between this life and the life to come is partly false. As long as the life of the spirit continues, the essential facts and ideals of life must be the same, for these depend not upon material conditions, but upon spiritual relationships, that is, relations with God and man. Life, wherever it is, develops by interaction with environment. And from the ethical point of view the most important environment is other living spirits. The different qualities shown in different lives, and the varying achievements of those we hold to have lived well, depend upon the number and quality of

their relationships with other lives. The good man is the man, the interaction of whose personality with the personality, of others, is to mutual benefit and development of character. The great man is the man who has had a wide range of influence upon other personalities. Now whatever may be the outward conditions of the life beyond, the spiritual conditions must be of essentially the same order as those with which we are acquainted in this life. They must be possibilities of communion with other personalities. Therefore it follows that in the social sphere, what is right and good, and makes for development of life in this world, will also make for the development of life beyond.

We then ought to think of life as a continuous development, part of which takes place in this world amid material surroundings, and part of which takes place in the world to come, of whose outward conditions we know nothing. But it is the same life that passes on from one stage to the other. And the most important factor of development in both stages is the same, communion with other spiritual beings. We have every reason to suppose that the life beyond is the more important part of life because greater in extent and more fully developed. The relationship of this present life to the life beyond has often been compared to the relationship

of childhood and youth to full grown manhood and womanhood. As in boyhood and youth we can trace the beginnings of those qualities which will afterwards characterise the full grown man ; so we may be sure that the way in which our lives are lived here will leave an impress on our personalities which will be seen in the life beyond.

We therefore conclude that the most important part of life is interaction with other spiritual beings. And the whole subject of our discussion is by what means this interaction is to be perfected, and thus make for the most fully developed communal life of all mankind. Spiritual life *is* communion with other spirits. And when such communion makes for the fullest possible development of those taking part in it in harmony with God and man, perfect life is attained. Spiritual life is, then, the final, most perfect and lasting form of life. In it individual development is merged in the development of the whole.. But the individual does not thereby cease to exist, nor does his development as an individual cease. Rather it is true that now first his own development becomes a real development, and his life, by the very fact of its intimate contact with other lives, at last gains its true aim and becomes satisfying.

Again, this spiritual development is in no necessary contrast to physical development.

The body need not war against the soul, nor need the material oppose the spiritual. In fact, in life as we know it the spiritual needs the material through which to express itself. It is true even of bodily life in the most primitive stages that no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. One cannot live without depending upon others. They are of use to him, and he to them. We speak with commendation of independence. We admire the man of independent spirit. But we do well to consider what these expressions really mean. For the word "independence" has two meanings which we must distinguish from one another. A life lived entirely alone, getting nothing from others, giving nothing to others, making or growing for one's self all that one needed, would be an independent life. Such a life is neither possible nowadays nor desirable. According to Homer, it was the sort of life that the Cyclops lived. But even he, if he was of no value to other people, appears to have preyed upon them. Such an independent life is the very opposite of the true ideal.

On the other hand is independence which is shown normally in earning one's own living. Properly speaking this means being of value to the community in certain ways, and gaining from the community about an equivalent in other ways. There may be a good deal of sordidness attached to the

idea as usually held, but in essence it is right. It would be more truly called interdependence. For that is what it is. It consists in differentiation of function with a view to more effective co-operation; and it is capable of expansion into a world-wide system of mutual helpfulness. All that is required to bring about this expansion is that each one set himself to do his very best for the community, rather than, as is often the case, to get the most out of the community. It is to be noticed that this "interdependence" is seen in material things. The victories of man over matter have all been expressions of the interdependence of mankind. And civilisation, with all that it means in human progress (and in spite of serious faults, it does mean much) is at bottom a spiritual phenomenon, for it is a combination of human spirits to conquer and use for their common benefit the world of matter. Thus it is that co-operation between members of the human family is often expressed in material terms, and is used to satisfy the material needs of individuals. But such co-operation is essentially a spiritual matter; it cannot take place apart from the interaction of spiritual beings. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that it is good. It may be either good or bad; and most frequently it has in it elements of both. But it is, even though its outward achievements be expressed in material things,

a social phenomenon. And the social is spiritual.

And this co-operation of human spirits is seen much more fully expressed in the mental sphere. While it is possible for a human being to satisfy after a fashion all his bodily wants without help from others, it is undesirable and futile. But it is not even possible for a man to develop his mind in isolation. His power of thought itself is developed by interaction with other men, either directly or through books. And the more he becomes able to assimilate, remember, understand and criticise the thoughts of others, the more his own power of thinking for himself grows. The mental life is essentially co-operative, and social; that is, spiritual.

And when we pass on from that to what we more distinctively denominate spiritual, the life of communion with God, the same factor of interdependence is even more strongly in evidence. The history of religion teaches us that in early days relationship to the Deity was always regarded as a social matter. It was not, in those days, with the individual that the god had to do, but with the tribe as a tribe, or with its representatives as standing for the tribe. Hence, too, we find amongst primitive peoples that law, religion and patriotism are identical. Morality is what the tribe requires, and that always has the religious sanction; it is what the god

requires. And with the development of religion the social factor has never been lost, though in certain cases it has been overshadowed by the individual factor; and it has taken on new and different forms from that observable amongst primitive peoples. In fact, one of the most marked phenomena of some of the most developed religions is that their very insistence on the individual is in order to produce a fuller and truer social life. The prophets of Israel laid the greatest emphasis on individual conduct, but their motive in doing so was that the social life might be clean and healthy. If that extremest of individualists, Ezekiel, taught that everyone must suffer for his own sin and rise because of his own righteousness, and insisted upon this in a way that is one-sided and scarcely in accord with facts, his object in doing so was the social welfare of his people; and the standard of religious conduct which he sought to impress upon the individual was essentially a social standard. Again the teaching of Jesus indicates that religion, love to God, and true social life, love to one's neighbour, are essentially the same thing. And this, like so much of His teaching, is crystallised into an epigram by John, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, *cannot* love God whom he hath not seen." The spiritual life is the social life; the religious life is the moral life. If at any

time the two have appeared separate, it is only in order that they may be more firmly and indissolubly joined.

And all religious experience confirms this. Every man may know God direct. In one sense the very object of his life is to do so. Yet, nearly everyone who comes to know God comes to Him through the instrumentality of some fellow-man. And the Christian Church is a standing testimony that the religion which has made most of the relation of the individual to God has also most strongly insisted that that relation is one into which other men enter also. For it cannot be perfected in isolation.

The meaning of all this is that bodily, mentally, and spiritually, life is no mere individual matter. Only as it enters into union and co-operation with other lives does an individual life really find itself. And only as lives linked to one another, and mutually enlarging one another, are also both communally and individually linked to God, do they find the true aim of their existence.

But this harmonious co-operation of mankind under the control of God, which is the full meaning of the ideal of life, does not come about of necessity, or without human effort and struggle. Life, as has been said, implies spontaniety, and that on the human plane involves consciousness of alternatives,

and choice between them ; in fact the freedom of the will. It is only as men see the true ideal of life, will its realisation, and put their energy into working for that realisation, that life develops towards the ideal. It is such grasping of the ideal and working for it with all one's might which Jesus meant when He said "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all [the necessaries of life] will be added unto you." And we shall gain further light upon our subject if we consider shortly some of the main implications of the phrase "Kingdom of God." For it is another way of stating the ideal of life which we have been discussing. We ought first to ask what the Kingdom of God is, and then what is implied in seeking it. And the whole of the rest of our study will be concerned with methods of seeking the Kingdom of God, or in other words with ways to life.

The conception of the Kingdom of God conveys to us at once the idea of full control exerted by God. From this, two conclusions follow: (*a*) If God is in full control, the resultant product will exhibit the character of God. That is to say, *what we mean by the Kingdom of God entirely depends upon what we understand by the character of God.* If we could grasp in all its fulness the idea that Jesus had of God, we should be able to give an adequate idea of the state of society represented by the term the Kingdom of God.

(*b*) Seeing that the Kingdom of God is an ideal, not yet in any sense fully an actuality in the world, we are not at liberty to assume that anything in the world that causes us distress (unless we have very cogent proof that it is good), or anything that we feel to be less than the best, is God's will. For obviously, if the Kingdom of God is to come, it cannot already be fully present. To say then that God is now in any complete sense ruler of the world is to shift the blame for evil from our own, or other people's shoulders on to God. And this we have no right to do. *The world as we know it does not represent the character of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* and we shall only confuse all our thinking if we try to delude ourselves into believing that it does. If human free will means anything, it means that a man can oppose God. Unless, therefore, we definitely know to the contrary, we are bound to trace all evil to this opposition of man to God, or to similar opposition on the part of other free spirits.

But God is to rule. How is that rule to be exercised ? The idea of delegated authority through a hierarchy receives little support from the New Testament. Nor does the idea of a set of infallible commands. There are a few such in the New Testament, and they, such as they are, certainly do not cover the whole of life. The Kingdom is within. That is its sphere of activity is within

the individual, controlling his ideas, desires and purposes, and thus bringing about right action. God can come into immediate contact with each individual soul. No intermediary is needed. It is the business of each to listen to the voice of God, and obey it. And God's commands are neither selfish nor arbitrary. He is not in the least like an oriental Sultan. He is Father. God is love. What He desires is not something for Himself, but the best for His creatures.

But is not the aim of creation, and the whole duty of man to glorify God? It is. But it is pertinent to ask what we mean by glory. God's glory is nothing else than His goodness. And it gains its fulfilment by awakening in man a responsive goodness, not by coercion and dictatorial authority. *God humbly serves the good of His creatures.* This statement may shock some, but if humility and self-sacrificing service for others are not characteristic of God, then Jesus Christ does not reveal Him. But if they are the divine characteristics, then the glory of God can mean no self-exaltation, no vindication of honour (as usually understood), no triumph over enemies (in the ordinary human sense of triumph), but a self-giving for the good of others, a winning of men by love, and a transformation of enemies into friends. And God's holiness cannot mean, as it used to be interpreted, that He will destroy the

wicked. Destruction is a devilish work. God is Creator, not destroyer. The Holy God must save men from their wickedness, and make them holy. The Kingdom of God then must be a society world-wide in its scope, for the Love of God is not limited. It must consist of men and women who are being re-created in the image of Jesus Christ. For God is Creator and Christ is the pattern man. And its government cannot be based upon outward laws, with their so-called sanction of punishment, but upon the willing obedience and loyalty of every one of its members; upon the conviction of every individual that God's way is the right way, and upon an eager willingness to follow it. There is in it no obedience as of slaves, but the free co-operation of free men. For the will of God is not the arbitrary wish of a despot, but is that good which is in the nature of things, that right which depends upon the constitution of personal beings, that love which includes all, and that truth which every enlightened soul must recognise. And so the Kingdom of God must not come by suppression, but by illumination, not by destruction, but by redemption. It needs the whole of every man, and it needs all men.

That is to say the Kingdom of God is the life of all mankind under the complete control of God. And that control is only exercised through the devotion of each individual to

the will of God. Because this comes about by everyone responding to the Love of God, and therefore desiring to do His will, adopting His purposes as their aim, entering into His attitude of mind, rather than by any use of coercion or compulsion, Jesus said "The Kingdom of God is within you," meaning that in its very nature it depends upon the free choice of the individual, that is, upon the developing of life. And because of the close relations of intimacy between God and man, which His ideal of the Kingdom of God implies, Jesus never refers to God as King, but as Father.*

The Christian aim, which is the Kingdom of God, or the fullest life, may then be thus defined: "A constantly developing life, always enlarging its powers and scope by harmonious co-operation, in a society organically one, under the complete control of God." This is individual life, but it is also communal life. But the individual is not in opposition to the community, nor does the community suppress the individual. It is a true life in which the individual finds his good in the communal good, and the good of all implies the full development of each. And this is so because all are members of one another. and together form an organic whole.

* The only possible exceptions to this rule are in certain of the Parables, where "King" is required by the story, not by its interpretation.

This is exactly the state of things that Paul suggests in his great discussion of the body of Christ.* Every part of the body needs the rest. No part can suffer without all suffering. Health is not a matter of separate organs simply, but of the whole. We know that this is true of the human body. It is also true of the whole of humanity even on the physical side. Nor can we limit this to the membership of the Christian Church of which Paul uses it. It applies to the whole of humanity. Whenever there is any connection, that connection should be helpful to both sides. We all belong to one another. Our happiness and prosperity depend upon one another. We cannot be selfish and self-seeking without doing injury to the whole, ourselves included. Our self-development is to be found in the development of the whole. Ideally there cannot be a clash of interests. Every case of what is called clash of interests depends upon a mistaken idea on one side or the other, or perhaps more frequently on both, of what the interests are, and how they are to be gained.† It is only because we look at life departmentally instead of as a whole, that we fail to see this. Finally, this ideal will never reach, and is never meant to reach,

* I. Cor., xii., xiii. and xiv.

† I have dealt with this question at some length in a previous work, *The Foundations of Peace*, Chapters viii. and ix.

stationary perfection. Yet perfection will be attained. For just as a perfectly proportioned infant may grow up under such conditions that at every stage of his development he is physically all that one can desire him to be at that stage, and yet is constantly developing, so when everyone takes his life as a vocation from God, and at every stage follows the Divine Guidance, the state of perfection will have come on earth. Yet individual and co-operative development will still continue, and must ever continue while life lasts.

II

THE OPPOSITION*

We defined the Christian Ideal as "a constantly developing life, always enlarging its powers and scope by harmonious co-operation in a society organically one under the complete control of God." The beginnings of this are present in the world already. If there were present nothing of an adverse tendency, development along the right lines would be easy. But there is present in Human Life as we know it an irrational factor. There is an opposition. Life is not merely an incomplete harmony ; there are in it elements of discord. It is not only that much of our good is imperfect ; we are faced with positive evil. If our definition of good be that which is directly making for the aim, we can conceive a steady but slow progress towards that aim, with which we might feel some impatience, because it was slow, but which, as far as we could see, was wholly good. But we do not see that. We can discern in human society forces which are quite definitely

* In this Chapter I am indebted to the author of *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, and particularly to her paper on "Repentance and Hope" in *Concerning Prayer*.

making in a direction opposite to that in which the aim lies.

We might compare our working towards the Christian ideal to a heavy waggon being drawn up a steep hill. It may be very hard work, but given a sufficient number of strong horses all pulling in the right direction the top will some time be gained. But suppose someone harnesses some of the horses to the tail of the waggon, and sets them to drag it down hill, then there is a positive force urging in the wrong direction, and it will not be surprising if, instead of going slowly up, or remaining stationary, the waggon begins to run down hill. Thus in the world there are tendencies pulling in the morally wrong direction. Opposed to good there is evil; opposed to the Kingdom of God there is the Kingdom of Darkness. There is wrong doing, wrong thinking, wrong direction of life, in short what the Bible calls sin. It is outside the scope of the present work to discuss the problem of evil in the philosophical manner. We are not concerned with how evil came to be—an interesting question, but purely academic. We are concerned with the intensely practical question, how is evil to be abolished? We shall only touch on the origin of sin in so far as it throws light on this problem.

From the fact that sin consists in a tendency opposite to that of the divine aim for human-

ity, it is opposition to God. Viewed from our human standpoint, as that for which we are to be blamed, it consists in knowing the better and choosing the worse. But much human thought and action runs counter to the Christian aim without *consciously* knowing the better and choosing the worse. Many a man has heartily, and even conscientiously, worked for ends, and by methods, which were utterly at variance with the Christian Ideal, and has all the time never doubted that he was serving God. We can scarcely call such a man a sinner, because he believes himself to be doing right. Yet, because his action is making against the true aim of life, it is wrong.

I

We then distinguish two sorts of evil in the world, both working definitely against the attainment of the Christian Ideal.

1. Conscious ill-will. Definite, positive, self-recognising sin. We all know the kind of act that is generally recognised to belong to this category ; murder, theft, vice, drunkenness, unprovoked violence against persons, and so forth. Those who commit such sins nearly always recognise them as wrong. If they justify themselves, as they often do, it is not on the ground that the act was right. in general, but that their circumstances were so peculiar as to justify it.

2. On the other hand is a much subtler form of wrong-doing, evil wrought by people who, in doing it, suppose that they are doing right. This may be called the sin of the wrong standard. For it consists in acting according to an accepted view of what is right, which nevertheless is not right. It is accepting external authority rather than conscience related to the facts. Therefore "Right" is not considered, though the word is used. As has been lately well said "men have made their submissions to external reality, have disobeyed their [own] values in their treatment of other men, of their own children, and even of themselves. They have done this, not merely through weakness, but also from a sense of duty."* One who so acts may incur no personal guilt; in fact his refusal to do it, if he still believed it to be his duty to do it, might be regarded as sin, as the words of Jesus recorded by the Western text of Luke vi. 6 show.† And yet, by acting in accordance with the generally accepted standards, he may be doing great and positive harm, and delaying the coming of the Kingdom of God. That this is no rare and exceptional occurrence, but frequent

* Clutton-Brock, *Studies in Christianity.*

† "On the same day, seeing a man working on the Sabbath, Jesus said to him, Man, if thou knowest what thou doest blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not thou art cursed and a transgressor of the laws."

in human affairs, will be seen by the consideration of a few instances.

Consider the story of Abraham. Abraham was just about to sacrifice Isaac, as he supposed by Divine Command, when he was stopped by a sudden realisation that God did not require human sacrifice. Human sacrifice, especially the sacrifice of the first-born son, was regarded by many of the people amongst whom Abraham dwelt as the greatest act of devotion to the Deity. But it was really a piece of barbarism, which helped to keep the people in a low moral state and prevented them from gaining a true idea of God. If, then, Abraham had refused to offer his son *while he accepted the current standards of his time and race*, he would have failed in living up to the best he knew. But still living up to it he would have helped to perpetuate what was wrong and inconsistent with any high and true ideas of God. It was by recognising that God did not require it, that devotion to Him could be shown in better ways, and thereby gaining a truer idea of the character of God, that Abraham escaped from the dilemma. In other words he served God, and helped in the advance towards the divine ideal, not by doing "what he knew to be right," but by discovering and acting upon a higher standard of right than he had known before. A standard be it noted which then, and for

long after, was utterly unrecognised by his contemporaries, to whom his refusal to sacrifice his son, if they knew of it, must have appeared to have been due to a lack of real devotion to his God. In short, Abraham's refusal of human sacrifice was a step in the great advance of religion which culminated in Jesus Christ and His teaching that God is Love. Yet it must have appeared to the people about him as irreligious.

Consider again the extreme forms of religious persecution which to-day are almost everywhere regarded with horror. Perhaps the ghastliest page in the history of religion is the story of the Inquisition; that long record of torture, mutilation and burning of Jews, heretics and infidels. Yet, given the general moral standard of the day, a standard which people then supposed to be Christian, the attempt to force heretics and infidels to embrace the true faith was a Christian duty; and it was this duty that the Inquisition carried out with thoroughness and vigour. We must recognise that *as long as forcing the recantation of false views was considered right, some of the most earnest and deeply religious men might feel it their duty to do the cruel work of the inquisitor.* Their whole humanity might revolt from the work, but unless they saw by a flash of divine insight that such methods were not God's will, they might feel compelled day by

day in torturing heretics to lacerate their own feelings, until they became hardened and impervious to the appeal of suffering. We may say that the inquisitor "ought to have known better." This is true. But the point is that he did not know better. He did not, like the common felon, transgress a generally accepted standard. He acted according to a generally accepted standard. What was wrong with him was not that he did not act "up to his lights," but that he did not discover the truer lights.

Let us take as our third example the attitude of well-educated, civilised Christian people of two or three generations ago to slavery. There is probably no better illustration of what this was seventy years ago in America than the naïve comments on the subject by Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn." It will be remembered how, in sheer goodness of heart, he helped a runaway slave to escape, and how conscience-stricken he was about doing it, excusing himself for participation in such wrong doing on the plea that he had not been "brought up respectable," and never could rise to behaving properly. Here again current standards were wrong. And in consequence one who was doing a kind and humane act regarded himself as a criminal and had an uneasy conscience.

These three examples all illustrate two very interesting facts: (1) that great self-

sacrifice may be required in acting up to the wrong, but generally accepted, standard, while to reject that standard may lead to an easier path (2) that healthy human instinct is often against the wrong standard ; which however overrides instinct, because it is founded upon ideas of duty and current conceptions of God. Thus it may happen that one who follows his natural human instinct may be doing what after ages will recognise as right, and yet may believe that he is proving himself a criminal atheist. This is because current ideas of duty and of God are sometimes false ideas. The wrong standard of duty is a worship of a false god.

It is not only in the past that we can see the workings of the false standard, and the human misery that is caused by it. If the teaching of Jesus of the boundless love of God is true, it is certain that all human regulations and codes of law, which have as their result the stunting of men and women and the prevention of true development, are wrong. But there are many such in the present day. Two of them are of great importance, because they affect all life in the civilised world. They are the concentration of land and capital in the hands of a few. It is difficult to write of these as we can of religious persecution, or slavery, because even to-day a great majority of the influential people of the world have not seen that

there is anything wrong in them, and the laws support them. Yet, taking the Christian standard of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, they cannot be justified. At the present day in Great Britain, which is one of the freest and best governed countries in the world, more than half the land is in the private possession of less than ten thousand of the population. But without land no-one can carry on either agriculture or business. It is, then, in the power of these comparatively few people to alter or hinder the development of many millions of their fellow countrymen. And this power they can, and do, exercise arbitrarily. That any people should have such a great power of control of the lives of others cannot be reconciled with the Christian idea of brotherhood. The way in which it has been as a matter of fact exercised cannot be reconciled with the Christian ideal of harmonious co-operation. For agricultural labourers are paid low wages ; have to live in insanitary houses, of which there are an insufficient number ; and always have a stunted and undeveloped life. This is not due to their folly or improvidence. (How can a man with a family be provident on 16s. a week ?)* It is due to the fact that they have to take what is given or starve, because they cannot get land to cultivate for

* This is pre-war rates. If he now gets 30s., or even more, everything costs twice as much.

themselves. But that is not the worst of it. The evil conditions of life in the country drive people into the towns, and conditions there are in some ways even worse than in the country, and partly from the same cause.

Again, the inequalities in the distribution of wealth are such that two per cent. of the people of Great Britain own two-fifths of all the wealth.* Thus while a very few people have far more of the good things of life than they can possibly use to either their own or other people's good, a huge mass of the people are always short of everything but the barest minimum necessities of life, and are liable from time to time to lose even these. This means that a large proportion of the population have literally no chance of improving their position. Beyond the meagre education which the State provides free, they have no possibility of mental improvement. And because of insufficient food they are often under-sized and weak. Most wholesome recreation and reasonable luxuries are beyond their reach, unless they further depress their condition, as they sometimes do, by going without necessities. But the wrong does not stop there. Wretched surroundings and lack of training pre-dispose to drinking and gambling. And these make the road to dishonesty and vice easier. Those who have studied the question of

* See *Riches and Poverty*, by L. G. Chiozza Money.

crime generally admit that an enormous proportion of criminals have come to their evil deeds through drink and evil surroundings. So that we are forced to the conclusion not only that owing to the unfair distribution of land and capital large numbers of people are seriously handicapped in life ; but also that indirectly these increase that acknowledged wrong doing which we call crime. All this is quite contrary to the Christian Ideal.

But we are not right in calling the individual capitalists and land-owners sinners. They are acting upon the ordinarily accepted standard. And nine out of ten of them never doubt that they are doing right. Many of them are up to their light sincerely Christian men. And some honestly believe that these inequalities were intended by God, and that any attempt to alter them is wrong.

The cure for this is to hold up the true standard, knowing that when that is generally accepted the system will be altered. It is the present standards that are wrong ; and to convince people of this is the preliminary to all reform. As long as some secondary standard of ethics, such as legality, or agreement with the general custom is the basis of judging, it is obvious that what is generally called crime will appear worse than the evils resulting from the false standard. But this is because when one adopts such secondary

standards one shuts one's eyes to half the facts. For ultimately neither law nor custom can be justified unless they are making for the harmonious development of the whole of humanity. But in so far as stunted life, evil habits, and even crimes are traceable to present laws and customs, however much these may have the sanction of antiquity they must be wrong.

But for many of the worst evils of the maldistribution of the land and capital the sanction of antiquity cannot be pleaded. The separation of the people from the land, and much of the evils of exploitation in industrial life are directly due to legislation passed by the propertied classes in their own interests, and with the deliberate aim of exploiting those less fortunate than themselves. Of this order were the enclosure of Commons Acts in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the laws against combination at the time of the Industrial Revolution.* But even here, though nearly everyone who has studied the problem at the present day would admit that great and patent injustice was done under the sanction of law, it would not be true to say that those who did it were conscious that they were doing wrong. The land owning classes honestly regarded themselves as a people superior to all others. For them and their happiness the world was

* See *The Town Labourer*, Hammond.

arranged. The manufacturers and merchants held theories of economics, according to which their actions were justified. These terrible acts of legal injustice were not conscious sin. They were the sin of the false standard. Of their perpetrators Mr. Clutton-Brock very truly says "Their political economy seems to us now a mass of insane delusions. To them it was science, just because it taught them not to trust their own values."*

It will now, I think, be clear that the evil in the world, which stands in the way of the Christian aim, is by no means all due to conscious sin, but that a vast amount is due to wrong standards of conduct. And it therefore follows that not only is it necessary conscientiously to act up to the standard we already recognise, but that it is also necessary to seek constantly to rectify our standards by the Christian Ideal. Only so can the opposition be overcome.

II

We shall gain a clearer insight into the nature of the opposition to the Christian Ideal if we consider what is the meaning of good, and what is its relation to God and to men. In the Middle Ages there used to be great debates amongst the schoolmen as to the relation of good to God. While

* *Studies in Christianity.*

both parties agreed that God would reward good and punish evil, one party held that things were good or bad because God so willed it, and for no intrinsic reason. The other maintained that good and evil were in the nature of things, and that God's relation to them was that He, as it were, took sides with the good against the evil. Neither of these alternatives is satisfactory. The first makes good and evil entirely arbitrary. The second can scarcely avoid enthroning something above God. It would make God subsidiary to right. The way out of the difficulty is surely to be found in the idea of aim. God is the Creator of all things, and the Founder of the world order. The aim of that world order would seem to be, so far as we are able to grasp it, the production of a community of free, intelligent beings united to God and to one another by mutual love, which expresses itself in harmonious co-operation for the development of all.

That therefore is good which makes for this aim, and that is evil which opposes it, or delays its consummation. Thus good and evil are not arbitrary, but in the nature of things. On the other hand they are not enthroned above God, but seeing that the whole creation is from God they too are dependent upon Him. But they cannot be arbitrarily altered even by God. Only if the whole aim of creation were different

could they be different. Good and evil are what they are, because the world is what it is. This means that evil is done, either by acting in a way that we know is contrary to the aim, or by holding an erroneous view of what the aim is, or of how it is to be achieved. Good then is what works towards the true aim of life, which is in harmony with the nature of things. This means that in some ways *good must be easier than evil*. We saw that this was so in the first three illustrations which we took. It was the path of supposed duty which was doing harm, and yet was hard. Many other instances of a like character might be found. The monk, for example, often had to fight against temptations which seldom come to the man who endeavours to do his duty in the ordinary life of the world. The Puritan by banning as sinful much that was natural and right, and which made for human good fellowship, and therefore was on the way to the true ideal, unnecessarily narrowed his life, cut off the natural flow of human sympathies, and therefore laid himself open to special temptations, besides becoming a tyrant over other men's consciences.

And it yet remains true that to aim at the true standard of life, and to work for it by the true methods is an uphill task. Again our illustrations show us how this comes about. The ordinary recognised evil-doer

has to fight against habit if he wishes to do right, and to substitute a belief in community interests in place of his own narrowly conceived selfish interests. This is a hard task. Those who recognise an accepted standard as mistaken have a task of two-fold difficulty. They are faced with the certain disapprobation of those about them; and they have also to contend with great difficulties in their own lives. In the first place, while they are sure that the recognised standard is wrong, they themselves were brought up in it, and they may not be able to escape an uncomfortable *feeling* of doing wrong when all the time they *know* they are doing right. Thus the ecclesiastic of the later middle ages, who came to believe in toleration, would be regarded with suspicion by his fellows as a friend of heretics, and can hardly have escaped sometimes questioning whether he really was a zealous churchman or not. Again, when one sees that an accepted standard is wrong, it is not always clear *exactly* what is the right standard that ought to be put in its place, nor precisely by what methods one must work for it. Intolerance and compulsion in matters of religion may be wrong, but exactly what the limits of toleration are may be very hard to determine. "How far," for example a tolerant ruler might ask "am I forcibly to prevent my people from persecuting unpopular minor-

ities ?" Might not the forcible suppression of such persecution be itself a form of persecution ? Or the anti-slavery agitator might easily be led into unfortunate and perhaps immoral methods of fighting against the real evil of slavery. To urge slaves to rebel, to stir up jealousy against slave owners amongst those who owned none, to advocate war to suppress slavery might all be helping to create as great an evil as that he desired to overthrow. This shows something of the difficulties of one who sees that an accepted standard is wrong. His way, if all would take it, would really be the easiest, because most in accord with the nature of things, but prejudice, established custom, and his own uncertainty and mistakes make his way hard. It also shows why the party of reform is always split into sections. Reformers are naturally not entirely agreed what the new standard is, and they differ very greatly about the methods to be used in working towards it.

III

One thing more, we must ask what is the root of sin ?

It has been well said that all sin is selfishness. This is seen in all actions, which are ordinarily regarded as wrong. They are actions in which the doer is aiming at good for himself, or for someone in whom he is

particularly interested, while he disregards the wider circles, including the person he injures and society at large. But unconscious wrong doing also has its root in selfishness, though not always in the selfishness of the individual who does it. He is mistaken as to the real quality of his action, deceived by the false standard of his age and people. The selfishness was in those through whom the false standard came into existence. Thus Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only son Isaac showed on his part the very reverse of selfishness—self-denial, carried to the furthest extreme. But how did the idea ever gain currency in the world that God could desire such sacrifice? It could only come from grasping, cruel men making God in their own image. Man pictured his God as selfish and cruel like himself. And then, even when many a man had, like Abraham, advanced beyond that himself, and become kind and generous, the idea of God still remained what it had been. The true man worshipped the false god. In the same way it could only be by regarding God as essentialy selfish that any one could think that He would desire the compulsory service of those whose hearts were still far from Him. The religious persecutor worships a false god. He does not worship the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is love. And the man who can be satisfied to see his fellow

man made less than man by being enslaved is a selfish man. If he thinks that slavery is a divine institution he too worships a false god, a god who is formed on the pattern of his own selfishness.

And coming down to the modern instances, the idea that the nature of the world was such that one small comfortable class, who did little or no productive work, had a right to be kept by the labours of many, whose lives were stunted in the process, shows selfishness at work. The persons who could desire such a state of things had too feeble a conception of human brotherhood, and inasmuch as they regarded it as divinely ordered they worshipped an unjust and cruel God. And the same must be said of those who set up supposed economic necessity above human feeling and human brotherhood. They were worshipping a false god, a god of selfishness, though in private life and in sentiment they may have been well-meaning, and even unselfish. For in private life they could afford to act on their feelings. In business they followed theory. But their feelings were right; their theory was wrong.

We have looked at the opposition as if it were entirely embodied in individuals whom we have regarded as separate from those who were working for the Christian Ideal. This was for convenience of treatment. But we

have to remember that in everyone there is a mixture of good and evil, and that one who is energetically working for the Christian aim in one department of his life may be unconsciously working against it in another, and may not be free even from conscious wrong doing. This should lead us on the one hand to careful self-criticism, and on the other to more charitable and comprehending judgment of others—in so far as such judgment is ever necessary.*

There is, then, both in individuals and in society a force of opposition working against the Christian aim. We have not discussed, and we shall not discuss, how this at first came to be, but we have seen that its power depends largely on deception. It is wrong masquerading as right. This ability of wrong to present itself as right appears ultimately to depend upon human selfishness, which implies narrowness of aim and outlook. Selfishness is the real essence of sin. For as the good of the whole of mankind is the aim, any concentration of attention on the self to the exclusion of others is the denial of the aim. The whole problem of conduct is then a social problem. How to act rightly towards others, and how to help them to act rightly. This we must discuss in the following chapters.

* On the whole question of judging others, see Chapter VI.

III

THE METHOD

We have seen that the object of Christianity is to attain a world-wide state of harmonious co-operation in which life will become progressively richer. This cannot be attained easily because we are ourselves terribly liable to mistake the true aim and to follow low ideals. We must therefore put all our energies and powers of mind into discovering what the Christian Ideal of life is; and as we discover it we must practise it.

Again we are faced with people who are actively working in the opposite direction. They are definitely the cause of harm and damage to others. And in many cases they are convinced that they are doing right. We saw that their opposition depends upon selfishness, misconception of the true aim of life, and finally upon idolatry—a false idea of God. As long as any of these remain, opposition, conscious or unconscious, to the Christian Ideal will remain in the world. The final conquest of evil must, therefore, come through the replacing of selfishness by love; by the understanding and adoption of the

true aim of life, and by a true idea of God, and the true attitude of devotion to Him It is, therefore, obvious that the teaching and preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which expresses love, sets forth the real aim and shows us the true God and eternal life, must be of overwhelming importance in bringing about the required change. But not only is preaching required. We must practise what we preach. For, in us too, there is something of opposition to the true way of life. If we are to work for the redemption of the world we must ourselves be experiencing the same redemption. We must see to it that we are not devoted to selfish, partial aims, but are making the universal Kingdom of God our one aim. Our first object must be to see the whole ; to make the good of the whole our aim. Our devotion must definitely be to the good of all. We must not mistake something that seems desirable for us individually for the general good. Our good must not imply harm to others. It must neither lessen their life nor prevent its reasonable and desirable expansion. On the contrary it ought to have a definite tendency towards the enrichment of the lives of others. If we conduct our lives on these principles we shall be of the nature of an object lesson of the right way. This does not mean that we shall feel consciously superior to other people, and regard ourselves

as patterns. It is a matter of common experience that those who, by their lives, have been the greatest encouragement to others to take the true way of life, have been unconscious that their lives were exemplary.

Up to this point then our conduct will be no different from what it would be in a perfect world. All we have to do is to overcome our own opposition to good (which may be very hard work), and to live with all our might for the true aim. But now comes the other factor. The Opposition. Evil-doers, though they can get no good by their deeds, may greatly harm those who want to do right. The opposition which the Kingdom of darkness organises against the Kingdom of Light can seriously delay the divine consummation, and cause great and undeserved suffering. It can often for a time neutralise the rightly directed efforts of good men.

What are we to do ? The action of others can definitely injure us and the world generally ; we can seldom prevent it without injuring them ; often we cannot prevent it at all. It is frequently suggested that we should by force either forestall or restrain evil doers, or, failing that, that we ought to punish them. When restraint can be employed without injury it may have a right use, but it is only negative. Forestalling or punishing, on the other hand, usually

implies injuring the evil doer, and therefore to advocate their use generally is fallacious. For, from the point of view of the *whole*, they make matters worse. Evil on one side does *not* counter-balance evil on the other, because if the true interests of all are identical, if humanity is an organic whole, there are *not* two sides. But by every act *the whole* is either better or worse. If another wrongs me he wrongs the whole; he wrongs God; he also wrongs himself. By injuring him I may sometimes perhaps prevent him from doing further harm, but I cannot thereby either cancel the wrong already done to me and to the world at large, nor put right the even more serious moral wrong that he has done to himself.

Much of our readiness to use such unsatisfactory methods as returning evil for evil is due to an utterly inadequate view of the seriousness of the situation wrought by wrong doing. The wrong-doer not only damages other people, which may be very serious, and is any way distressing and unnecessary. He also much more seriously damages himself. He increases his spiritual blindness; he deepens his moral insensibility; he further dries up in himself the springs of true human feelings, and sinks deeper in moral degradation every time he injures another. All this means that the whole world is worse for his evil deed. We

must also recollect that, seeing that some of the greatest evils are due to the wrong standard, and are often perpetrated by those in high places who are in a position to punish others, but scarcely to be punished by such well-meaning reformers as ourselves, any suggestion that forcible methods should be used to overcome evil is not very practical. If there is any other way of overcoming it which can be used by ordinary people in these most difficult and serious circumstances when the evil is in the false standard, it is at least possible that violent methods can be dispensed with at all times.*

There are two problems involved in righting the wrong. First the world problem—what can be done to compensate to the whole of humanity for the evil deed? Second the individual problem; how can the evil-doer be transformed into a good man and a useful citizen? We must at once recognise that generally there is no easy or quick way of cancelling wrong. Evil deeds and their effects cannot simply be wiped out. Their consequences are too wide spread and too deep for that. But if we think of the aim of life we get light upon the problem. The whole of mankind is, or ought to be advancing towards the divine aim. The effect of every evil deed is to retard that

* The futility of most punishing methods will be shown in the next chapter.

advance, which means that had it not been for that deed the general state of human society would have been better than it is. Now, if by any means, in spite of evil deeds, the general state of mankind can be made as good as it would have been if that deed had not been done, the evil of that deed will have been as nearly cancelled as is possible, so far as society in general is concerned. It is manifest that such a consequence can only result from an extra effort of good, being made by someone. And because we are members one of another this extra effort is required of anyone and everyone who is able to make it. No doubt it will be said that it is the evil doer from whom it is especially required. Granted. But it is the evil-doer from whom, simply because he is an evil-doer, there is least probability of getting the extra good. If he has done evil unconsciously he will probably be unaware that any extra good is needed. If he has done it consciously, and in any degree deliberately, it is obvious that compensating good is not at present to be got from him. Only, in either case, when he has seen his evil and repented of it can we expect any help from him in cancelling its effects. The need of the world is a demand for an extra effort of good from anyone who sees the need. And to all who are working for the Christian aim this comes as an urgent call. We have

called it an "extra good," but by that it is not to be understood that the doing of this extra good is doing something more than is required of us. It is our duty. For the duty of every good man is made more exacting by the evil deeds of those who work against the Christian aim. If we are to do our duty in view of the evil results of evil doing we must increase our efforts for the welfare of all mankind.

But that is only the solution of the first problem. The man who has done wrong, who has worked against harmony and co-operation, is likely to continue that work. The extra efforts of good people may in part compensate for his work. But as long as he continues doing wrong he is harming the community and himself. It is therefore necessary that he be, if possible, turned from his evil way. That is, a change of mind is required in him. He must be brought to see that the evil which he does is *really* evil. He must be brought to see what is the good he ought to be doing instead. And he must be brought to *will* good instead of evil.

To show that evil really is evil an indication of its results is necessary. We mean by evil something that harms the whole community and prevents or delays harmonious co-operation. Therefore evil will always in time show itself in results. And if these

are clearly seen by the doers there is some chance of them being impressed by them. For, as we saw in the last chapter, most evil is done under the impression that it is really good, or that, though generally wrong, particular circumstances justified it. But the results exhibited must be natural results. To argue for punishment on this basis is invalid. It does not logically or conclusively prove to a man that an act of his is wrong, if he is beaten or imprisoned for doing it. All it really proves is that someone else, who had power to injure him *wanted to do so*. Only if he can be sure that the punisher is disinterested does punishment even carry with it the conviction that others think his deed wrong. But he may even then honestly think them to be mistaken. Only when the evil doer sees that his act has harmed the community can this part of the method of converting him work rightly.

This is true of both sorts of wrong doing. It is quite obviously true of unconscious wrong doing. For, until a man begins to doubt the old standard, how can he think that his action according to that standard was wrong? Under these circumstances those who punish him are naturally regarded by him as the evil-doers, while he is the innocent sufferer at their hands. Thus suppose in the days of American slavery, northern Abolitionists had attempted to

"punish" notorious slave dealers. The latter would have regarded themselves as victims of spite, and their punishers as hypocritical ruffians, but there is no likelihood that the punishment would have reformed them. Suppose again that Socialists were to come into power in Great Britain, and to attempt to "punish" leading landowners and capitalists, whose ordinary methods of life had really been responsible for much of the inequalities of wealth, and thus for a huge mass of unnecessary suffering. Would there be any probability that the punishment would be effective in bringing reformation? Would it not rather produce increased bitterness and an intensified desire to turn the tables on the Socialists by a counter-revolution? Or take the reverse case, which has the value of having happened fairly frequently. Is there any record of a socialist or working class agitator having come to see the error of his ways by being imprisoned? Have any but a negligible minority of conscientious objectors been turned into soldiers by repeated imprisonment? And have these few even changed their opinions? Have they not rather been compelled to do what they still believe to be wrong? In the first class punishment seems utterly futile. But if, in any case, in the other class the wrong-doer believes that his evil deed was partially justified—and this happens very frequently—is it likely

that punishment will do anything to change his mind ?*

The endeavours then of right thinking people must be turned to making the results of evil-doing obvious. To do this care must be taken to prevent, as far as possible, the wrong-doer being able to lay the blame on someone else. For example, the thief must not be able to say, " I was forced to steal ; society had abandoned me," or " I had been unjustly treated, cheated out of my rights, and was driven to violence." This means that we must not in our ordinary life support methods of action that may drive members of the community into open wrong-doing. Again the idle and useless person, who perhaps commits crime, must not be able to say, " I was never properly educated ; I was taught neither good habits nor a useful trade." This means that we must energetically improve both the quantity and quality of education that is open to all, and see that every one has a fair chance of becoming a useful member of society. And of course, most of all, we must see to it that the wrong-doer cannot say when shown the results of his wrong-doing, " You call that the result of my wrong-doing ; it is really due to the wrong-doing of someone else ! " or " It is due just as much to your evil treatment of me." That is, we

* The case of the ordinary criminal is considered more fully in the next chapter.

must always work for the establishment of true justice.*

But the positive side must also be exhibited to the evil-doer. Not only must he be shown that evil is evil. He must also be shown that good is good. Our own actions must be an advertisement for good.

The following appear to be the chief ways in which this should take place. It must be clear to all that they are directed unselfishly for general good. They must be directed to the particular and obvious good of the one we are trying to save. They must bring no harm to him. If possible they must be such as will lead him to see his identity of interest with us and with those he has harmed. Probably we shall succeed in this best as we carry out in practice our own belief in identity of interest. And finally, instruction, reproof and exhortation have a right place in our efforts for the good of the evil-doer. And along with these means which are aimed at the mind of the evil-doer we must use personal means which can touch his heart. Our sympathy and love for him must be evident.

Thus then working from general principles we get as the *Method* four ways of compensating evil.

(i.) Our personal extra devotion to the good of all.

* For the true meaning of Justice, see Chapter V.

(ii.) An exhibition to the evil-doer of the results of his acts.

(iii.) An exhibition to him that good is good, and an attempt to prove his identity of interest with the whole.

(iv.) Sympathy and love.

Of these ii. and iii. are most intimately connected. For without the revelation of good, evil can scarcely ever be recognised as evil.

In all this we can only do real good as we grasp the identity of interest between ourselves, the evil-doer, and the whole.

Thus from general principles implied in the Christian aim we have seen something of the line of action which is to be taken in advancing towards that aim. This is very largely in opposition to the general belief in the matter. It is almost entirely educative rather than punitive. Is it the right way ? Can we get confirmation of it ?

CHRIST'S WAY

The Christian belief is that God has revealed Himself to men in Jesus Christ in order to save them from their sin and bring them into unity with Himself and their fellows. How is this done historically and in the experience of the individual ?

The contrast between what Jesus was and what the Jews expected the Messiah to be is the most striking fact about the Divine

Revelation. God has all power, and so one would say presumably, could put the world right by autocratic methods, if that had been the best way. This would naturally include exact governmental regulation, severe external discipline, punishment of evil-doers; in the extreme case capital punishment, extermination of rebels and war against opposers. That was the way which the Jews expected the Messiah to work. But God did not work that way.

Instead of an autocratic king He sent a working man whose life was remarkable, chiefly in three things: (i.) His exceptional kindness to all who were in need, coupled with power unobtrusively to help them. (ii.) His remarkable teaching, much of which even His followers to-day do not really accept, much less practice. (iii.) His sympathy with, and interest in, the people whom religious leaders regarded as hopeless. His whole influence was given to bringing about a change in the individual, and through that and only through that a change in the whole community.

The second striking fact is that this Messiah instead of conquering His foes and instituting His reign at the expense of the lives of thousands, as was usual with kings, and as His people expected, allowed Himself to be taken by His enemies, and without resistance to be killed.

The third striking fact is that though His death appeared to be the end of all things, *as a matter of simple historical fact it did inaugurate His reign.* And that reign has lasted longer than any human dynasty, and is constantly spreading in extent. For it is a fact that in every country of the world, where He is known, there are large numbers of people, who, if what they regarded as their loyalty to Him came into conflict with their loyalty to the State, would never hesitate in obeying Him to disobey the State. In such lives He effectively rules now. It seems obvious then that the method of Jesus is the right method.

Of what sort then is this method of Jesus ? One who was deeply impressed with what He showed of God, summed it up in the words, "*God is Love.*" He had seen in Jesus the attempt to win the world to the right way of life by means of example and sympathy, and by these carried to their utmost extent. That is the way He tried to win the world, and that is the way in which He has won countless individuals. For the typical Christian experience is something like this. We see the life of Christ radiantly good, fully devoted to unselfish service for the good of all. That condemns us. For we cannot but contrast ourselves unfavourably with it. We see His death the result of His life and His claims when they met the prejudice, blindness,

folly and sin of ordinary men. And that, too, condemns us. For it is obvious that it was not exceptionally wicked people who brought that death about, but ordinary, respectable, in part well-meaning, people like ourselves. It was prejudice and jealousy on the part of the Pharisees ; concentration on political rather than on religious issues on the part of the priests ; fickleness on the part of the common people ; and habitual disregard of justice on the part of Pilate, that led to His death. And though we may never have been guilty of what are generally accounted crimes, we can none of us claim to be innocent of similar sins to those which led to the greatest crime in history. If we had been there we might have agreed in His condemnation. And that is our condemnation. Can there be a stronger condemnation of sin than His life and death together exhibit ?

But Christ also shows us that the true life can be lived. And His sympathetic love, His personal care for each one of us gives us the courage and strength to live the life. The power of friendship we all experience in life. We can know it supremely here.

By this condemnation, example and friendship it is that evil is conquered in us and good is raised up. That is the common experience of all real Christians. These are the forces which have wrought our salvation.

It is only rational to suppose that the salvation of others will come by the same means. It is our privilege to join with Christ in His work for the world by using the same methods that He used.

To sum up then. It would appear both from general principles and from the revelation of God in Christ historically and in Christian experience, that the way to overcome the opposition of evil is ; in ourselves by a more ardent search for, and a deeper devotion to the Ideal ; in others

(i.) by an extra effort of good.

(ii.) by a *natural* condemnation of evil, *i.e.* by showing its results.

(iii.) by showing good in action.

(iv.) by sympathy.

From neither investigation do we gain any ground for supposing that coercive methods and punishment are needed. How far, if at all such methods are to be used we shall discuss in the next chapter. From what has been said it is at any rate obvious that they are not the chief methods.

IV

PUNISHMENT

It was shown in the last chapter both from general principles and from a consideration of the work of Christ, that the way to overcome the opposition of evil is :

(i.) By means of an extra effort of good.

(ii. By means of the natural condemnation of evil ; that is by showing clearly and unmistakeably its natural results.

(iii.) By as plainly demonstrating in action its opposite good.

(iv.) By sympathy with evil-doers.

Punishment was not approved, and neither general principles dependent on the Aim of Christianity, nor a consideration of the method of Jesus, point to its use. This does not certainly and necessarily mean that it may never be used. Our inquiry in this Chapter is whether and in what circumstances punishment may be used. And this involves a discussion of what Punishment is, and what is to be achieved by it.

On the Christian basis Punishment can only be justified if it can be shown to be making towards the Christian Ideal. That Ideal is a fully-developed life ever enlarging its powers and scope by harmonious co-operation in a society organically one under the direction and headship of God. If punishing evil-doers makes it easier for society to attain that ideal, punishment can be justified, not otherwise. But in that punishment generally consists in the infliction of pain and disabilities which have to a greater or less extent the effect of repressing or hindering the development of life, it appears on the surface to be opposed to the aim. It can only be compatible with it if (i.) The hindrance to life caused by it is only temporary, and is the prelude to an enlargement and development. And (ii.) If no other or better way is available, which may help to the development without causing the hindrance. Punishment as we know it in home, school and civil life is a phenomenon of very mixed motives and varying results. Punishment of the children in the family and school is a part of the larger problem of education, and to it our present discussion does not apply. What is chiefly before us is legal punishment, its basis and its results. But the same reasoning applies *mutatis mutandis* to all forms of punishment.*

* Punishment of children in home and school is different, better and generally much more effective than punishment

There are three theories of punishment :

(i.) *Retributive :* The punishment inflicted is supposed to be the exact equivalent of the crime committed. The criminal gets exactly what he deserves.

(ii.) *Deterrent.*—The punishment is inflicted in order to instil into others a fear of doing wrong in the way the criminal has done it.

(iii.) *Reformative.*—The punishment is inflicted with the intention of reforming the criminal.

Sometimes a fourth class is added, *Preventive Punishment.* The object of this is to keep the criminal from the possibility of committing further crime. This is done by means of imprisonment. But unless imprisonment for life is seriously contemplated for every criminal, preventive punishment cannot even achieve much in the direction of prevention, except it be at the same time reformative, in which case it really falls under class iii. Many people express satisfaction when they hear of a criminal being sentenced to a term of imprisonment, saying, " Well, anyway he will be put out of mischief." But unless he is reformed by his imprisonment,

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inflicted by the State, owing to the fact that almost always the personal element is strongly emphasised. The parent or teacher who knows and loves the child is the inflictor of the punishment and thus, though mistakes may often be made, the general moral influence is in the right direction, because the child is assured of the interest in his welfare on the part of those who are punishing him. This is almost entirely absent in the State's dealing with criminals.

society has gained no permanent benefit, for at most he is kept out of mischief for a few years, generally only for a few months, and at the end of that time, if unreformed he is as great a danger as ever, often greater. We need not then further consider this suggested fourth class. But we must discuss the other three classes of punishment with some care.

I. RETRIBUTION

Retribution has no aim beyond itself. It does not propose to reform the criminal or to deter others. If supposedly retributive punishment does either of these, it ceases to that extent to be retributive. The essence of Retributive Punishment is that such and such a piece of wrong-doing *deserves* and ought to receive such a punishment. This dealing of exactly equivalent punishment is supposed to "Vindicate the Law"! This phrase needs investigation. What can be meant by "Vindication of Law"? "To vindicate" means "to support, sustain, to free from all suspicion of dishonour, invalidity or the like." It is derived from the Latin "*vindicare*," whose original meaning is "to lay claim to, to support" &c., and which secondarily means "to avenge." To vindicate the law, assuming the words to be used in the original sense, then means "to free the law from suspicion of invalidity" or in general "to support the law." But law is a means to

an end. Its purpose is to produce right conduct in people. If it is a truly Christian law, intelligently conceived, its purpose must be to make the Christian aim easier of attainment. It can only be vindicated, that is freed from suspicion of invalidity, in so far as it attains this aim. That is in so far as it helps to produce right conduct in people, as it helps to make the Christian aim easier of attainment. This deterrent punishment by restraining wrong-doing, or reformative punishment by turning criminals into honest men, may effect. But there does not seem to be any conceivable way by which purely retributive punishment can vindicate the law in this sense. Only if the phrase " vindicate the law " be understood in its secondary meaning " to avenge " can purely retributive punishment vindicate the law. Probably that is the sense in which it is often used. But if that is its meaning " vindication of the law" is utterly useless. It does no good to the criminal, in fact it often makes him worse. It does no good to society, and it almost certainly depraves those who are charged with inflicting punishment. For to cause suffering to any one, unless it be really productive of good to him, cannot but brutalise and degrade. Really preventive measures, or means that tend to cure the criminal, then may truly vindicate the law in a Christian and rational sense. Retribution

does no such thing. It is pure revenge. And as such is un-Christian.

Again we may ask what is exact equivalence of crime and punishment? Petty thieving was frequently, in the Middle Ages, punished with torture and death. A century ago criminals convicted of theft of anything but of the most paltry description were generally hung. Nowadays a small fine or a month's imprisonment is the usual punishment. Which of these is the true retributive punishment? Which did the crime deserve? If one of them is right, clearly the others are wrong.

There is one form of punishment which appears to meet the requirements of exact retribution, and that is the *Lex talionis*, the law of retaliation, which seems to have formed a part of most primitive law systems, and had a place in the Old Testament. It decreed that the injurer was to suffer exactly the injury he had inflicted. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Jesus definitely repudiated this law, so we have the highest authority for saying it is un-Christian. And it is easy for us to see good reason why He put it on one side. It does not right the wrong, but increases the amount of human suffering; nor does it give much promise of reform in the wrong-doer. It is almost entirely out of use in civilised states. But with its disuse the idea of retribution has

unfortunately not disappeared but still breeds evil.

The disastrous effect of the present system of punishing which, whatever its intention, is generally regarded by its subjects as retributive, is nowhere more clearlyse en than in the fact that when a criminal has served his sentence he regards himself as having purged his offence. As in reality he has done no such thing, and futhermore is more often than not morally worse for his punishment, the total effect of such punishment cannot but be on balance to make matters worse, that is to increase injustice.

The paying of compensation, not the suffering of punishment, is the nearest approach to righting the wrong. For one who has stolen from another, or damaged another, obviously has offended against the other. No doubt he has also offended against Society in general and against God ; but the first and most obvious sufferer is the one he has directly injured. But law in the Western nations regards all crimes as chiefly offences against the State. To try to compensate the injured party for his injury is seldom a part of the administration of Justice. Yet it must be clear that Justice is not done while anyone suffers under injustice, and no attempt is made to give him his due. If the State has suffered by the wrong-doing of the criminal, it has suffered through the one he has directly

damaged. For the State then to square its indirect account with the criminal,* but to pay no attention to the account of the directly damaged party, is a travesty of justice. It comes of regarding Retribution as the aim of punishment, and therefore, thinking of the State as avenger. It is valuing institutions above persons. It is revenge not justice.

The obvious means of rectifying the wrong in the case of theft and damage to property is to make the wrong-doer repay what he has taken, or pay compensation for what he has destroyed. This appears to have been almost universally done in primitive times. It is nothing but elementary justice; and it is difficult to see why it should not be done nowadays. Under the Probation System of late years it frequently has been substituted for punishment, with generally speaking markedly good results in reformation of offenders. Of course in damage to life it is not applicable in the same way. But to cause a man who has damaged another's sight or otherwise injured him to pay compensation, even to the extent, in very bad cases, of partially supporting him for the rest of his life, would be far more rational than the present method of committing him to prison. It would at any rate do something towards

* That is on the false supposition that retribution does square the account. Our contention is that this is a sheer delusion.

cancelling the damage done, and would probably have both a reformative effect on the wrong-doer and a deterrent effect upon others. Thus altogether it would make for justice in a way which present methods do not.*

We must then conclude that retributive punishment is not rational, for it does not really vindicate the law, by producing right conduct; nor is it Christian, for it is nothing else but revenge, and that Jesus Christ certainly forbade. It ought then to be entirely abandoned. Not merely ought all forms of punishment that are intentionally retributive, and only retributive, to be abolished; every circumstance of reformative or deterrent punishment that is retained because the criminal deserves it, and cannot be justified on the ground that it benefits either the criminal or society generally, is also retributive and should therefore be eliminated. It can only serve to confuse the real issue, by making something other than the harmonious co-operation of Society, through individual development, the aim.

II. DETERRENCE

From the entire condemnation of retributive punishment given above, it will easily

* Obviously, such compensation would always have to be limited to what a man could reasonably pay. If a man had stolen, and squandered, £500,000, it could not be exacted from him, because he could not honestly earn such an amount.

be understood that many forms of deterrent punishment are also condemned. Usually it has been assumed that the severe treatment, physical suffering, rigorous imprisonment and general hardship, which was inflicted as retributive punishment, was of value also as a deterrent upon other intending or possible criminals. It used also to be comfortably assumed that such treatment tended to reform the criminal. But this idea can now no longer be maintained by those who have studied the subject. The facts of recidivism* are too strong for such pleasant theories. The question is can such punishments be justified on account of their deterrent value, when the idea of retribution is abandoned? The answer seems clearly to be "No." It is a denial of the manhood of the criminal to *make* him suffer only for the good of others. Every human being is an end in himself. He has a life in which are possibilities to be developed for the good both of himself and of others. To regard only individual self-development is one-sided and disastrous, but for society to regard only its own good, and not that of the criminal, in its dealing with him is also one-sided and disastrous. To *force* anyone to subserve only another's good cannot be in accord with the Christian Ideal.

* That is relapse into criminal habits after punishment. The cases of this under normal conditions are extraordinarily numerous.

On the other hand it is contended, and with some truth, that the great probability in all well governed states, that crime will be found out and punished, does tend to prevent crime being committed. To what extent this is a factor in keeping order, and so in ministering to the true development of the community, it is not possible to discover. But two facts of importance must be borne in mind in discussing the value of Deterrent Punishment. (*a*). That however valuable its superficial results, the motive upon which it works is fear, and this is generally an unsatisfactory motive for right conduct.* And (*b*) That a number of factors go to make up the deterrent effect of punishment; from the severity and disagreeableness of the punishment itself, which is perhaps the chief element in deterrence for brutal and immoral persons, through the sense of disgrace, which has probably very little effect upon such people, but is undoubtedly the chief element in deterrence for the bulk of the people, up to the sense of having done something which, in the general opinion, is regarded as wrong—the motive which weighs with all whose social sympathies are well developed, as well as with all who like to do as others do. Only in the first case does the deterrent effect depend

* "Unsatisfactory," because the man who does right through fear does not do it because it is right, but because he hopes to avoid unpleasant consequences.

upon punishment being inflicted. That the crime be found out and abhorrence be widely expressed of the deed and its doer, is quite enough to produce deterrence in the other cases. Moreover, the deterrence which really depends upon public opinion is not a bad thing. It is right that people should hesitate to do what others regard with abhorrence. As a deterrent public opinion is most valuable. Therefore the cultivation of a sound public opinion on moral questions is one of the best ways of preventing crime.

But when deterrence has failed, and some one has committed a crime, the public detestation of his act and of him personally for having done it, often stands in the way of his reformation. It is notoriously hard for one who has been convicted of any crime, or has "done time," to get decent employment. And it is this fact, as well as the debasing effects of prison life, that is responsible for the frequent continuance in crime of those who have once been inmates of prison. Society will scarcely let them earn an honest living. This means that in almost all cases deterrence has some undesirable results. Probably, if refunding stolen property, or compensation for damages, were always a chief element in legal dealing with crime, a very satisfactory deterrence would be the result, combined with something approaching real justice to the injured party. But even then some effort

ought to be made directly to reform the criminal.

III. REFORMATION (moral)

And this brings us to discuss means of reformation. I say advisedly "means of reformation" rather than Reformative Punishment, because the latter phrase naturally implies disabilities, hardship, restraint and suffering, and though these may sometimes be required to bring about reformation, there is no necessity to assume that they are always needed. For as the end to be aimed at is the good of the whole community, including the criminal, if this can be attained apart from anything that is usually regarded as punishment, there is no reason why punishment should be inflicted. To argue otherwise is to advocate retribution. Again, if it be objected, as it frequently is objected, that we must think not only of the good of the criminal but of that of the community; we reply that if the good of the criminal, which we aim at, is his reformation, that is obviously the good of the community as well. For what means of dealing with crime can possibly be more to the good of the community, than that which will turn one who was a danger to it, into its productive servant and benefactor? It is not through any lack of concern for the general welfare that we desire to reform criminals, but from

an intelligent grasp of what is for the general good.

If our object is to reform the criminal rather than to punish him, it follows that we shall not endeavour "to make the punishment fit the crime," but to make the treatment benefit the criminal. We shall not be concerned with the comparative heinousness of burglary, embezzlement, fraud and poaching; or with the degrees of guilt in the varying classifications of homicide. We shall rather inquire what it was that brought the criminal to the commission of his crime. How far his training or want of it, his circumstances and his own mental and moral defects were the cause of his act. And we shall make such inquiry not with a view to the proper distribution of blame. That is generally a futile business. But with a view to setting right the defect.

We may ask how far are a man's surroundings to blame for his wrong-doing? If they are wrong, so that they may make it easy for him to go wrong and difficult to keep right, the obvious remedy is to alter those surroundings, or, if that be a matter that cannot be done quickly, to remove him to surroundings of a helpful character, at the same time endeavouring to bring about the change in his former surroundings, as otherwise they may be the cause of evil to others. If drink is the cause of his wrong-doing, measures ought to be taken to cure him of

the drink habit. If, through sheer starvation and despair he has been, as he would say "forced" to steal, he obviously ought to be helped to find useful work, by which he can support himself, and be of value to the community. If his evil act has been due to a fit of passion, in all probability he will be overwhelmed with remorse. What he then needs is sympathy combined perhaps with wise reproof and advice. If perverted moral ideas, revenge, hatred or malice are the cause of his ill-doing, what is needed is what we may call a course of moral and spiritual education, such a course of treatment as will make him see how false and pernicious such ideas are. This will best be done if he can see and feel their opposites in operation. To cure a man of hatred he must experience love; to cure him of malice he must experience considerate kindness; to cure him of revenge he must experience the returning of good for evil.

There are also, unfortunately, many criminals whose action is almost entirely due to mental defects, insanity, weakness of mind and so forth. Probably nearly all these ought to be put under care, being segregated, but kept as happy and comfortable as possible.

In all cases what is necessary to reform the criminal is extra care for him on the part of society. His anti-social tendencies must be conquered by it being proved to him, that,

whether he cares about other people or no, other people care about him. His idea, that one must look after number one, must be disproved by it being demonstrated in practice that he may find his good in the good of others. He must be taught the folly and sin of his deeds by living in a society where care for others is constantly practised. This means that in normal cases the most important conditions for reforming criminals are :—

(*a*). *Healthy Surroundings.*—Such an environment, physical, mental, moral and spiritual as tends to promote sound living.

(*b*). *Useful and interesting work.*—It must be useful in order to demonstrate to the criminal that he can both support himself and be of use to society. It must be interesting because otherwise it will be difficult for him to apply himself to it. And it is most essential that no *unnecessary* difficulties be put in the way of the already difficult task of his reformation. And it should have the further interest of being the work of his own choice. There are a vast number of different aptitudes developed in different men. All can probably be put to a useful purpose. It is important then to give a wide choice of kinds of work, so that the doer may gain the maximum amount of good from it. All work affects character. The more energy, interest and skill that can be

put into work, the more the doer will grow.

(*c*). *Sympathetic supervision, instruction and advice.*—There is need of well equipped and experienced men and women, with insight into character and love for the unfortunate, who will dedicate their lives to the reforming of criminals. Such people ought to be easy in manner, of high moral character and of considerable ability in dealing with people. They must be wise and kind, but their kindness must not degenerate into sentimentality. They may at times need to be stern, but not hard. And, because their task will be very difficult, they need above all things patience.

For the purpose of such work for criminals our present prison system is no good. It is vitiated by the retributive idea, and most of its methods and regulations are repressive of personality. Its life is so unnatural as to be a positive hindrance to taking up the ordinary activities of the outside world. And in the majority of cases its effect upon prisoners is to make them worse rather than better. Certain newer experiments in dealing with criminals approximate to the suggestions here given.

The Probation System, which has had some years' trial both here and in America, has a record of very successful results. It aims at reforming the delinquent without punish-

ing him. Generally it is employed with young persons and first offenders, but there seems ground for thinking that it might work successfully in many other cases. When the delinquent has been convicted the Magistrate, instead of sentencing him, announces that he shall be allowed a chance to recover his lost character and will be given a year's probation. He is put under the care of a Probation Officer, who visits him frequently, helps him to find work, if that is needed, and may also get him into other surroundings, if those in which he is appear unsatisfactory. On the expiration of a year, if he has been steady, and is regarded by the Probation Officer as likely to develop along right lines, his conviction is cancelled. He is regarded as reformed.* This system is not certain to turn our reformed characters as though by machinery. It is a human method and depends for its success on human character. The strong and sympathetic Probation Officer, gifted both with insight and humour is essential to its success. A fussy or grandmotherly person, or one still imbued with old-fashioned ideas of punishment can ruin the scheme, and the lives of the probationers.

In America experiments have been made which have had most encouraging results in reformation of prisoners. The essence of

* See *The Probation System*, Cecil Leeson. (P. S. King & Son, 1914).

these is useful work, good surroundings, sympathetic treatment, and encouragement of the growth of a corporate spirit and a sense of honour. Mr. Mott Osborne, whose book *Society and Prisons*,* should be studied, has had great success in reforming prisoners. So far the experiments have been carried on in prison buildings, constructed for a prison system not unlike the British, but the discipline and methods have been radically changed.

Again several experiments for the reform of first offenders and child criminals have been tried both here and in America with marked success. The best of these appear to be the George Junior Republic in America, and the Little Commonwealth in England, in both of which self-government is the foundation of the system. The well-known Borstal system too, is an improvement on the ordinary prison, but in it the retributive idea has not been eliminated, and evidence from the other experiments goes to show that its success probably would have been more striking if its methods and principles had been more radically different from tradition.

The only element in these (with the exception of the Borstal System) which remains distinctly punitive is the restraint and compulsory segregation. In the Probation System even this is not present, and its success seems to show that at any rate very

* Yale University Press, 1916.

often even this element of punishment is not needed. In the more ideal systems which are sketched out by the Penal Reform League* the difference from the prison system is even more strongly marked, and detention in separate institutions is only employed in order to bring the criminal under good influence and healthy surroundings.

One objection, a practical objection, is often urged against such systems as those just mentioned. They are said to make it pleasant for the criminal, which is true. And it is further said that it is not right to give the wrong-doer such a good time, when many honest men have much less congenial work, and are not so well housed or fed. *This is a valid objection, but not against methods of reform, which are not only Christian in spirit and method, but are proved good by their success. It is an objection against our Social System, which allows such things as grinding, unescapable poverty and joyless lives to hard-working people in the richest countries in the world.* We need to reform our methods of dealing with crime, but we need also to reform our whole system of living and what lies behind that, our whole standard of values in life.

General advance and penal reform are in fact connected together. This may be seen in history. The brutal and unenlightened

* Headquarters: 68a, Park Hill Road, London, N.W.

methods of treating criminals a century ago neither produced reformation nor deterrence in any perceptible degree. For crimes of violence were far more frequent then than now. Nor can we suppose that the humaner prison methods of the middle nineteenth century had the chief part in producing that improvement which actually took place. Forthey were still far from right, and the recidivist was much in evidence. The chief cause of diminution of crime was a general advance towards humane and Christian standards of life. Three chief factors in this were a growing emphasis on the moral fruits of religion, the spread of education, and the growing idea of social justice. Had it not been for these there would be no movement for penal reform. These have consciously or unconsciously touched all classes; and besides tending to mitigate the severity with which criminals are punished, have steadily tended to reduce the supply, both directly by making violence less attractive, and indirectly by tending to remove some of the injustices under which the lower classes suffered, and which from time to time were a contributory cause to the commission of crime. Even more than to methods of reformation we have to look to this general advance towards "gentler manners, purer laws" to bring about the final disappearance of crime.

To sum up then, we have seen that Retributive Punishment is un-Christian and irrational; that Deterrent Punishment cannot be advocated unless the retributive element be wholly eliminated, and even then cannot be regarded as desirable; and that Reformative Methods, which can scarcely be called punitive at all, have produced excellent results, and are obviously in line with the Christian aim and the Christian methods.

V

JUSTICE*

THE conclusion of our last Chapter, that the element of Retribution ought to be entirely eliminated from our treatment of wrong-doers, and their reformation be our one aim, will be found by some people wholly subversive of their ideas of justice. For both in popular belief and in legal theory justice is closely connected with retribution. To give up all attempt at retribution is then, so it is supposed, to throw over justice. It might be commented on the last chapter, "What you have said has no doubt some truth in it, and clearly represents one side of the Christian Ideal. But it is mercy and not justice. You are right in insisting that mercy should *temper* justice. But the element of retribution must be retained. Without it there is no justice, and justice is as essential to Christianity as mercy."

It is therefore, important that we consider the question: What is justice? Generally

* The germ of this chapter was a paper in *The Venturer*, by Professor C. H. Dodd, entitled "Justice." The development of the theme is entirely my own, and I do not claim his authority for some of my opinions, with which he may possibly not agree.

the answer to this question is that justice consists in fairness ; absence of partiality ; equality of treatment ; in giving to each what is his due ; and in particular in rewarding the good and punishing the evil. There is much in this definition that is true. We must agree that there can be no justice apart from impartiality, that favouritism is utterly incompatible with justice. But it is by no means easy to decide exactly what is meant by "giving to each his due." This may mean giving each what he deserves, or it may mean giving each what he needs. In the one case his due is what his virtue or vice has earned for him ; in the other case his due is what he requires to enable him to live well. From what has been said in the last chapter, it will be realised that these two interpretations of " due " may be quite incompatible, and contrary to one another.

Again, while to reward the good and punish the evil is a straightforward and understandable idea, a further consideration of what it implies shows that it is not very satisfactory. " The good man deserves to be rewarded." But if good is really good, the good man is already the happy man. Good is what makes for life, development and harmony. The good man has, therefore, the seed of supreme happiness and satisfaction in himself, even if he has not yet reaped the fruit. To add a reward appears unnecessary. The fact is

that the idea that good must be rewarded by anything outside what it itself is and produces, depends upon the one really damnable heresy that good is not good but bad. It may find some support in the circumstance that much has been reckoned good which is not good at all. Thus asceticism and mortification of the body were for ages reckoned good by official Christianity ; but they were not good. To deny one's self in that sense could only be done either from a perverted sense of duty or for the sake of expected reward. But to deny one's self in the only truly Christian way, in order to help someone else and as an outcome of love, itself produces its own reward, and neither expects nor desires another. And this is clearly the view of Jesus Christ expressed in the beatitudes.

Furthermore, to do good for the sake of reward is not real virtue, though it may have the outward appearance of virtue. It is only another form of seeking gain. Unless good is loved and followed because it is good, it is not really loved and followed at all. All the best good in the world is done from choice, because it is really liked. Short of that doing good does not imply virtue. This means that to reward virtue, in the sense of adding some arbitrary gift to it, is in the end impossible. For the very attempt to do so has the tendency of making the good rewarded cease to be the outcome of virtue.

The idea that justice consists in punishing evil is not less unsatisfactory. For in so far as punishment is painful, disabling or productive of personal injury, it is bound to have a depressing effect upon the evil-doer, and thus, other things being equal, is calculated to increase his tendency to do evil. Evil-doing naturally harms the evil-doer, it lowers his spiritual and moral vitality. To have his physical vitality also lowered by punishment can only, under ordinary circumstances, make him worse. For pain and suffering have no natural tendency to purify the human spirit. Their tendency is rather to harden and deaden it. If saints have learnt from them and gained in spiritual power, that was because they were saints, and by the power of God in them they were able to turn all circumstances to good. It was not because bodily evil is spiritual good. To maintain that is a denial of God.

Again there is no need to add punishment to sin. Evil results naturally follow it. These will be reaped sooner or later by the sinner, and nothing but his reformation can prevent that.* Only, therefore, if punishment will work his reformation or help towards it, can it be advocated. But in that case it is no part of retributive justice.

The ordinary idea of retributive justice, in

* Not that his reformation always prevents such results being reaped.

which "due" means "what is deserved," then is found unsatisfactory. Can we gain a true idea of justice by taking "due" to mean "what is needed"? Let us discuss Justice from three points of view, all of which have authority for us as Christians, and all of which lead us to regard justice as what is due, taking "due" in the sense of "what is needed to enable people to live the right life," not in the sense of the deserts of their virtues or vices. The three starting points are as follows :—

(i.) From the aim of Christianity. That is on the general principles we have hitherto dealt with in this book.

(ii.) From a Theological basis. That is discussing Justice in its relation to God, and to God's methods as we see them revealed in the world about us and in the work of grace in Jesus Christ.

(iii.) From certain striking sayings of Jesus which throw light on the matter.

I.—THE IDEA OF JUSTICE, AS APPROACHED FROM THE AIM OF CHRISTIANITY.

It will be acknowledged by every one that when the Aim of Christianity as set forth in Chapter I. has been achieved, perfect Justice will reign. It will further be conceded that any state of things short of that aim is not

fully a state of Justice. In fact, that complete justice to all men everywhere cannot be done until the Kingdom of God has come. But this means that the supreme necessity is to work for the achievement of that aim, to seek the Kingdom of God. What most directly makes for the aim of Christianity is then the nearest approach to Justice in this imperfect world. To put it in other words: *The shortest route to the Ideal is the closest approximation to Justice.* For the individual this means that type of thought, feeling and action that best helps towards development, harmony and co-operation in life. Justice, that is, implies the methods of working for the aim as we saw them in Chapter III.

Justice can only be fully done when all act justly, that is ideally. To establish justice we must then do all we can, first to do right ourselves, and secondly to make it easy for others to do right, and hard to do wrong. This does not mean to add rewards to virtue and punishments to vice, but to take obstacles out of the way of right doing, to make the steps to repentance and reformation as easy as possible, to encourage and help all who try to do better, to remove temptation to evil, and to show the attractiveness of good. This is evidently a much wider matter than what can be dealt with in so-called Courts of Justice. It covers the whole of life. It means the endeavour to give to every one

training, equipment and education, such as may enable him to make the best of life; that is so to develop his own personality that he will help in the right development of all others whom he meets. These are due to all men, because without them none can live as he ought.

On the other hand, it must be recognised that there are obstacles in the way of right development in the circumstances of many people and that justice requires that these be removed. Grinding poverty, immoral society, and ill-health all ought to be abolished. And so ought excessive riches, and all those means by which people lord it over others, and escape the healthy and useful discipline of work and equal human intercourse. Those who have what are termed "advantages" of birth, fortune and position are often really labouring under great disadvantages, and Justice to them, as well as to their neighbours, requires that these disadvantages be removed. But in neither the case of the poor and oppressed, nor in that of the rich and oppressive, can the disadvantages from circumstances be satisfactorily removed until they see them to be disadvantageous. Social Justice has, as a necessary part of it, education, otherwise solid and permanent results cannot be achieved.

Justice then is done as the developing individual gains his right place in the

developing community, and helps its development with every power of spirit, mind and body. This process is essentially unselfish yet it requires self-development. It is essentially individual for it must consider the good of each one. But it is also essentially social, for the good of each can only be attained in society. And it is world-wide, for unless the good of each person, and of each community, is made a part of the wider good of the whole world, there remains an element of injustice. This implies that all real needs and interests are compatible with one another.

Now it is remarkable that the general conclusion that Justice can only be done as each has his right place in the community ; and that Justice can only be defined and understood as that which makes for the right life of an ideal community, is the essential teaching of the great classic discussion in Plato's *Republic*. Plato's ideal of what is an ideal community, and therefore of what makes for justice, is by no means all that can be desired. It is not international. Hence it retains the elements of enmity and hatred. It is not free, for it retains the institution of slavery. A society without slaves was probably never within the outlook of the ancient world. It does not have equality between man and man, or equality between the sexes. In all these respects—and they are very important—Plato's ideals are not

up to the Christian standard. But for all that in his germ ideal, his idea of Justice as essentially dependent upon a community in which each had his right place, he was right and far ahead of subsequent ages. The Christian Church has not taught the idea of Justice here set forth, nor has it risen as high as Plato's ideal. Its idea has been dominated by the thought that Justice consists chiefly in the punishment of wrong-doers. And this is partly derived from an inadequate idea of God's Justice. This we must consider in the next section.

II.—JUSTICE IN RELATION TO GOD.

It has been usually held that God punishes sin and rewards virtue, and that this double re-action on His part is His Justice. Theologians, preachers and religious writers have frequently expended great pains and ingenuity to show how the righteous prosper and the wicked perish. In Old Testament times it was assumed that the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice were to be seen in this life. But that was found not to be in accord with facts in the case of individuals, as the Book of Job testifies. There the mystery of suffering is set forth. The righteous suffers and none can discern why. Later Jewish thought was fain to postpone retribution to

the day of Judgment; and rewards and punishments became eschatological. They were supposed to be dealt out in the next life. This alteration in outlook was forced upon reflective and deeply religious men, because they did not see in this life that dispensation of rewards and punishments which they held to be essential to God's Justice. His justice was not yet demonstrated. They passionately believed in it. They were convinced that He would yet be proved just. But this conviction was based not upon what they had seen and known of the divine retribution but upon faith in the Character of God.

And at the present day it is very difficult for any one to establish the Justice of God on the basis of observed retribution. If many sinners suffer severely; so do many who are striving with all their might to do right. If on the wider scale the great aggressive empires have one after the other been extinguished; have not their victims, the small and innocent nations suffered terribly in the process? And it would seem to be only by a selection of favourable facts, and the overlooking of unfavourable ones, that the theory of God's retributive justice can be established. This is seen particularly in the common religious terminology, which calls evils that fall upon the wicked, "punishment," and assigns them to God's retributive

justice; and calls similar evils that fall on the good, "chastisement," and assigns them to God's Fatherly educative care. Real piety no doubt lies behind this distinction; but neither clear thinking, nor careful observation of facts, can justify it. We may then conclude that the retributive Justice of God cannot even yet be clearly demonstrated in this world. Either like the later Jews and early Christians we must postpone it to the next life, or question whether the retributive idea of Justice is a true one at all.

And there are serious objections to the merely retributive idea of Justice. If God's Justice consists in the reward of virtue and punishment of evil, what are we to make of Paul's teaching that merit does not count; that salvation is not by works, and that God justifies the ungodly? All this cuts away the basis of any idea of reward and punishment constituting Justice. Even more serious is the objection that, if justice consists in meting out rewards and punishments, the salvation of men through Jesus Christ is contrary to Justice. This has of course, been recognised, and in the traditional theology of both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Churches, the salvation wrought by Jesus Christ is held to have proceeded from God's mercy and to be an expression of His love. Mercy and Justice are supposed to be at variance. Mercy dictates that sinners be

saved; Justice that they be damned. The greatest fact of God's dealings with men, the Atonement in Jesus Christ, is then mainly interpreted as an expedient to get over this opposition between Justice and Mercy. Justice which requires either payment of debt or punishment of the wrong-doer, is satisfied by the Death of Christ, which is regarded as either equivalent to payment of man's debt, or as the suffering of the punishment due to man's sin. Now without going into the inadequacy of this idea both on moral, rational and scriptural grounds,* it is enough here to point out that its effect is to portray the attributes of God as at strife with one another. God is by it represented as the victim of opposing claims put forward and supported by His own essential qualities. It cannot represent the truth. For if it were true, it would be God, not man, whom the Atonement put right.

Nor can some such conclusion logically be avoided as long as Justice and Mercy are opposed to one another. And if desiring to make the character of God consistent, we suppose Mercy to be abolished and strictly retributive Justice to hold the field, we are in no better case. For if the former alternative logically led to the idea that mercy

* For a fuller treatment of this question, the reader is referred to *Reconciliation and Reality*, by W. Fearon Halliday, in this Series.

triumphs over Justice, and so easily lent itself to an antinomian interpretation; the latter alternative, in which Justice abolishes Mercy, makes the salvation of any one who has once sinned an impossibility. For Justice demands punishment; punishment by general depression of character weakens resistance to sin; sin therefore increases, and brings increasing punishment. To this there is only one end, the destruction of poor erring humanity. That cannot be the design of God. If it were He could not be good.

What then is the true view of the relation of Justice to God? We must first discuss what has been mistakenly supposed to be God's Justice, the Punishment of Sin, and then show what His Justice really is. Does God punish sin? I believe it is true to say that *God's Justice does not require Him to punish sin, and that He does not punish sin in the sense of inflicting in retribution for sin any arbitrary pains and penalties.* Nevertheless sin always brings suffering, degeneration, destruction and death. We may roughly distinguish two spheres of life in which these can be seen. In the Physical sphere sin brings suffering, but this is very often not brought directly to the sinner himself. The anti-social acts of any one harm others, tend to destroy their life, and thus lower and impoverish the life of the whole world, and with it, often very indirectly, and

perhaps scarcely perceptibly, the life of the wrong-doer himself. These anti-social sins are much the worst, for they are a direct injury to other people. Distinctly different in character and results is vice, which while it sometimes directly damages others, always directly damages the doer, and brings apparent retribution on him. But morally and spiritually no man can sin, whether by acts against others or against himself without suffering. Sin (that is conscious wrong-doing) scars the conscience, dulls the moral sense, and lowers the spiritual vitality. And thus it tends both to destroy the personality, and to get worse and worse, because less and less resistance is offered to it. The single act contrary to the recognised standard does not at once in most cases destroy either the physical lives of others, or the spiritual or moral life of the doer. But it begins a course of action, which, unless it is stopped, appears to be certain ultimately to culminate in both these disasters. There is in moral affairs something like Newton's law of motion, "That a body will continue in a state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless deflected therefrom by some force from without." So evil-doing leads to further evil-doing, and to the resultant moral, spiritual and physical decay. Unless something stops it the end of this is death. This is in the course of nature, and as nature has

its ultimate source in God, we may trace it back to God.

This is what we sometimes call the law of Retribution that works in the world, though that is scarcely an adequate name for it. But there are several points of importance to notice about it, which distinguish it from that theologically conceived law of Retribution, which has been set forth as God's Justice.

(i.) It is neither a law of exact requital of each individual sin, as the idea of Retributive punishment strictly conceived requires, nor is it a law that expresses what has often been taught in Theology, that the first and smallest infraction of the divine law deserves, and entails, eternal damnation. On the contrary it is a slow natural process working towards destruction and death. It is started by the first infraction of the Divine Law, but its terrible end is only assured by the fact that each infraction leads to another (unless something intervenes to hinder), and so the moral state grows gradually worse until spiritual and moral degeneration lead to death, *if nothing intervenes to prevent it.*

(ii.) It involves not merely individuals but the whole world. This retribution, if it be right to call it so, is not a process which can be observed working in the case of the individual alone, even in the spiritual sphere. And in the physical sphere it is entirely a

race and community matter. The evil deed harms some individual other than its author and through him retards the world's development in the right way, or hurries its development in a wrong way. It entails physical evil consequences directly to the one injured; spiritual evil consequences directly to the injurer; and indirect evil consequences, both physical and spiritual to the world at large. For example hatred causes a man to murder his fellow man. To the murderer, through his deed comes a moral and spiritual injury, that would not otherwise have been his. He is a worse man than before. The injury to the murdered man is, from the point of view of this life, irreparable, and his family and dependants are injured physically by the loss of their natural bread winner. Possibly they starve. They are injured spiritually by henceforth treasuring hate and planning revenge. And the world generally is worse because the probability of another murder is very great; and, as often occurred in ancient times, an almost endless blood feud may result. And this means constant murders, utter insecurity of life, hatred, bitterness and every evil passion. Thus the chief sufferer *in the end* is neither the murderer himself (except spiritually), nor the immediate relations of the murdered man, nor even that man himself, but the community to which all belong. For that has by the evil deed been

started upon a path of degeneration in which murder and hatred constantly increase. This has a natural tendency to widen in extent until at last the whole world is affected by it.

(iii.) This natural process is not in any full sense Just. It is not the demonstration of God's Justice, because it makes things worse and worse. It is the law of cause and effect at work. Like follows like. "Sin, when it is full-grown bringeth forth death" (James i. 15). It can only be called just in one sense that it is the outcome of regularity and impartiality. The laws of nature do not work on and off. There is no favouritism about them. They are reckonable and regular. And in this sense they represent God's Justice, but not in any higher and fuller sense. And in this very regularity there is hope. For though when wrong is done, the results naturally produced are further wrongs, the same regularity is found when right is done. If hatred tends to increase hatred, and injury leads to further injury, love tends to increase love, and good deeds lead to further good deeds.

If then, there can only enter the world a sufficiently strong force working in mankind towards what is right and good, all the natural laws, which when evil was predominant, led to the increase of evil, will as naturally work for the increase of good. The force from

without, as in the case of the body in Newton's law, can not only intervene and prevent mankind rushing to destruction, as it increases in power it will send them upward to salvation. In Jesus Christ this new force came into Human Society. The inward, spiritual power, which comes from Him produces that change of mind, that change of direction, that repentance in man, which sets him moving in the right direction, and therefore contains in it the promise of the final and complete salvation, the restoration of all things, the redemption from corruption into the liberty of the glory of the Sons of God.

The regularity of working which tends to the increase of evil is sometimes called the Divine punishment of Sin. It seems to be what Paul called the Wrath of God, in Rom. i. and ii. It is a natural law which in its regularity and reckonableness displays fairness and impartiaity, and in that sense it is just. But it is not just in the sense of being an exact retribution. For the greatest sufferers are often not those who have done greatest wrong. Its claim to be called just is rather that it provides the means by which, if once a right direction is given to the development of human society, a state of perfection will at last be gained. For as sin brings death righteousness will bring life. It provides the conditions under which the higher and fuller justice of God can work

out to the salvation of mankind. And this brings us to the fourth point.

(iv.) The results, as we see them working out towards degeneration and destruction, are not in any complete sense God's will or His doing. It is often maintained either that everything that happens in the world is God's will, His doing ; or that He definitely connects evil results with evil deeds. We may at once reject the first suggestion. If human freedom is a fact it is simply not true. And if human freedom is not a fact, there is no use in discussing moral questions, as such discussion can have no influence on conduct. But the second needs a reply. Is it true that God definitely wills that certain evil deeds should have certain evil consequences ? On the basis of His Omnipotence* it is suggested that this must be so. But in the first place, if this is an arbitrary act of His will, it implies that He directly wills to harm people. This is very difficult to reconcile with His goodness. In the second place, without denying His Omnipotence, is it not a perfectly fair assumption that the very creation of the worlds and of free beings is a self-limitation of that Omnipotence ? Having already taken action in certain directions, His further action is conditioned by the action already taken. Thus, as before stated, right and wrong are neither arbitrary demands of God,

* See Appendix, "The Divine Omnipotence."

nor enthroned above Him, but are those lines of action which will make for the good or harm of the beings He has already created, inside the conditions already established by His creative act. In the third place we may argue from human analogy, and point out that anything that men have made for good and useful purposes, can also be misused and put to evil purposes, without the maker being in any sense responsible for the evil. A knife is an excellent thing with which to cut wood or food. But if one uses it to cut one's self, one has no business to blame the knife maker. A rope is very useful for a number of purposes. That some fool may use it to strangle himself, or someone else, is not the rope maker's fault. These considerations ought to make us careful how we assign to God's fore-ordination the results of actions which He never willed. The fact is that we seldom take Human Freedom seriously enough. If it is a fact, it explains all evil in the world which can be traced to human agency.

We then conclude that this supposed Law of Retribution is not properly speaking retributive, but is a part of the whole casual system of the world ; that while, as a natural process, it has its source in God and is thus an expression of God's will, its evil results were never intended by Him, but are the result of mistaken and wrong choices on the

part of free beings ; and that it is not in any full sense the expression of God's Justice, though its regularity is a basis upon which His true and complete Justice may express itself.

We therefore, turn to discuss what God's Justice is. It can be no satisfaction to a Just God to punish evil, unless that punishment were necessary to reform the evil-doer. A Just God can only be satisfied when Justice reigns in His creation. But this cannot come about by making destruction and calling it Justice, which would be the state of things if evil went on bringing forth evil. To establish Justice must necessarily mean to make people just, not to destroy them when they are not just. The Justice of God will be seen not in destroying men in their sins, but in saving them from their sins.

This is, I believe, what Paul means in Romans when he speaks of the "righteousness (*i.e.* Justice) of God manifested apart from the law." (Rom. iii. 21ff.) It is not a righteousness manifested in punishing Christ for the sins of men.* That would be a righteousness manifested through the law. *It is the righteousness manifested in making people right.* The righteousness which shows God to be both Just Himself and the Justifier

* For, though that has been the interpretation put upon the passage, Paul says it in so many words neither there nor elsewhere.

of others. God is proved just by making just. That is, the *Justice of God consists in providing those means by which man can live the right and good life.* This obviously consists in a moral appeal which brings repentance, and the imparting of spiritual power, by giving to men His friendship and favour when they do not deserve it.

All this comes to men through Jesus Christ. He brings the friendship and love of God to us. His moral appeal is manifested both in Life and Death. And by this means, by calling men to righteousness, and by inspiring and strengthening them to live the right life, He proves God Just.

III. JUSTICE AS SET FORTH IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS

Jesus was passionately interested in the establishment of Justice. He came to fulfil the law, whose object was Justice. (Matt. v. 17.) And He demanded from His disciples a higher justice than the professional exponents of justice achieved. (Matt. v. 20.) It is therefore surprising that we never have an instance in all Christ's ministry where we would say, unless we have reformed our ideas of justice, "There He was doing Justice." And we have several instances where He definitely refused to do justice according to Jewish Law. When the sinful woman, caught

in the act, was brought to Him He refused to punish her, deliberately refrained from condemnation and dared her accusers to undertake punishment.* When the man who had been cheated out of his inheritance by his brother came to Jesus asking Him to use His personal influence to set things right, Jesus refused. Yet the request was obviously just in the ordinary sense of the word. (Luke xii. 13-22.) What are we to make of these? On the old idea of Justice they can scarcely be given any even apparently satisfactory explanation. But there is a parable of Jesus which taken simply as it stands, clearly points to the true idea of Justice being that which we have already set forth in this Chapter, the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard. (Matt. xx. 1-16.) In this parable it is said that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who hired labourers for his vineyard at different times in the day, and then, when he paid them, paid to each the usual wage for a full day's work. This was not giving to each what he had earned. But it was giving to each what he needed to support life. The obvious meaning then of the parable is that the Kingdom of God, complete justice, will include amongst other things giving people what they need, not what they deserve. And this

* John vii. 53 to viii. 11. This story is out of place in John's Gospel, but it is certainly a true story of Jesus, as is generally recognised by competent scholars.

is precisely the idea of Justice, at which we have arrived by general considerations, and from a study of God's methods in the world.

The action of Jesus in refusing to divide the inheritance, referred to above is a confirmation of the belief that He held this idea of Justice. For not only did He refuse to divide it, He solemnly said, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," and went on to give the parable of the Rich Fool, the point of which is that material possessions are of no value where the realities of life, union with God and man, are absent. It was therefore, because, in the case of these two brothers quarrelling over the inheritance, possession was practically irrelevant to Justice, that our Lord refused to act as arbiter. The thing equally in both brothers which stood in the way of true Justice was a false value set on material things. Only by realising that something was more important could either do or gain justice. And this fundamental lack in both Jesus attempted to supply.

After what has already been said we are in a position justly to appreciate the meaning of those words of Our Lord which are usually regarded as most paradoxical, and which very few of His followers attempt to put into practice, those concerning Non-Resistance. The true idea of Justice is the key that will unlock their meaning, and show how they

are both a further proof of the truth of the idea of Justice here set forth, and an important addition to our understanding of the means by which it is to be attained.

In place of the Law of Retaliation, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," Jesus said, "Resist not him that is evil; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." In these words a general principle of action is stated, "Resist not the evil-doer." And then certain illustrative instances are given as to how the principle is to be carried out. In facing personal violence, rather suffer a repetition of it than return it. Rather surrender more than is demanded, than resist legalised robbery. Rather than resist compulsion, do more than is required of you. Always be open-handed and generous. This teaching represents a line of conduct which is obviously very difficult. But the difficulty in carrying it out is entirely internal. If a man is convinced that it is the true method of facing evil, nothing in outward circumstances can prevent him carrying it out. If he can conquer the passion in himself that makes for resentment

and retaliation; if for the natural self-love he can experience love to his injurer, he can do what Jesus Christ here advises.

The real reason why the Christian Church has practically ignored these words is that most people are quite sure that they do not represent the true method of facing evil. They believe that resentment, retaliation, forcible resistance and punishment are the true ways of conquering evil. But we have seen both in the last Chapter and this how far from right these are. Is it not possible that in these words Jesus was setting forth the true way of establishing Justice in the Earth? I am convinced that this is so, and that they are therefore of immense importance because they represent His method of establishing Justice, stated in the sharpest contrast to the false methods of the world. And this method is rational and practical. For it refuses to increase evil. It endeavours where possible to do good to the evil-doer. It forms a very striking example to him. It is a strong moral appeal. And to put it into practice nothing is needed but the grace of God, which is free to all. It can be used as effectively by the weak and poor as by the strong and rich.

But of most importance is its effect upon the evil-doer. In the heart of every one God is working. Passion may be in the ascendant, evil thoughts, mistaken ideas,

perverted standards, and other wrong influences may smother God's voice, and so a man's words and actions may be, as far as one can see, wholly bad. But for all that the voice of conscience is sometimes heard, and God works through that. When a man does violent and unprovoked wrong, he stifles the voice of conscience. And when, as usually happens, the one wronged retaliates, his retaliation helps the evil doer to stifle his conscience. For the necessity for swift action tends to keep the attention fixed on outward things; and retaliation can be regarded as a sort of justification after the event for injury given. Thus the more fiercely resentful the injured party is, and the more he retaliates or sticks up for his rights, the more he helps the evil in the evil-doer to stifle his conscience.

But non-resistance has precisely the reverse effect. It refuses to help to stifle conscience; it even reinforces it. Everyone likes to think himself a fine fellow. Even a ruffian likes to think himself a brave man and a good fighter. Non-Resistance makes it impossible for such an one to continue to think thus. One who continues to harm those who refuse to retaliate, and even try to do him good, cannot regard himself as brave and noble. His conscience tells him that he is a brute. And if he thinks at all, he knows that conscience tells the truth. Of course

this may for the time make matters worse. But in the end, simply because conscience is constantly reinforced by the non-resistance of his victim, good will win in him. This is so because good is stronger than evil, God is stronger than the devil. At least half the strength of evil as generally experienced is due to the fact that well-intentioned people by trying to conquer evil with evil, strengthen the evil, which they think they are opposing. But the non-resistant is not satisfied with merely refusing to help to stifle conscience. If he can, and where he can, he attempts to do active good to his enemy. Thus he will try to provide for his natural physical wants. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink." And will plainly demonstrate that he intends nothing but good to him. In all this his conduct is exemplary. He is acting in the way that he would desire the evil doer himself to act. He is doing to others as he would they should do to him. And he is refraining from making matters worse.

This is nothing else than carrying out in an extreme case the Method of the Christian Ideal, as we saw it in Chapter III. It is, so far as in his power lies, providing what is needed to enable the evil-doer to do right. It is Justice as we have so far seen it.

From these three points of view, general principles derived from the Aim of Christianity, observation of the methods of God in the world, and the teaching of Jesus, we find that Justice is that line of conduct towards people which will most effectively help them to be what they ought to be. This is a conception not only in some directions almost the opposite of the usual legal idea, but also so enormously wider and deeper as to cover the whole of life. It relates not only to our treatment of evil-doers, but to our general attitude to everyone ; and it has implications in our individual lives. For if we are to advance Justice in this sense in the world, we require not only to act justly, but to have such characters, that we shall naturally have a beneficial effect upon other people. And it transforms the idea of State and Governmental Justice from retribution, to the careful provision of all that is necessary for the welfare of the people.

Judging

VI

JUDGMENT OF OTHERS

From what has been said in the last two chapters it will be recognised that a revision of our ideas about moral judgment may be needed. While Justice was supposed to consist in, or at all events to include, retribution, moral judgment upon people was necessarily involved in it. But if, as we have seen, retributive punishment has no place in the Christian Ideal, and if Justice consists in providing for all men the conditions in which the right life, which makes for the harmonious development of humanity, can be lived ; then it would seem that the value of judgment of others is doubtful, and we are constrained to ask if, and under what conditions, it should be used. For unless judgment serves the advance towards the Christian Ideal ; unless its exercise tends to help forward harmonious development of all mankind in co-operation for the general good, it ought to be abandoned. We must then discuss the various classes of thought and action comprised in the term judgment. First, there is the general exercise of the critical faculty. This involves the capacity to come to a decision, the ability to review

circumstances, and discern from them what is the right thing to do. Thus we speak of "a man of good judgment," by which we mean one who generally comes to the decision which the future shows to have been wise. And in a slightly different sense we speak of "decision of character," and regard it as valuable. We think it is a good thing that a man should "know his own mind." When there is a union of these qualities applied to the ordinary affairs of life, we call the combination "practical common sense." When the same qualities are carefully trained and cultivated for use in highly specialised matters we think of them as "scientific ability," and we say that the man so trained has "a scientific mind." All these forms of judging are of the greatest value in life. They are necessary for making the best use of material things, and for producing the best type of life. And the same ability to judge, applied to moral issues is no less valuable and necessary. In fact, when we speak of decision of character, and of a good judgment, we often mean moral character and moral judgment. Wisdom in moral choice, and clearness and promptness of decision between moral alternatives, are obviously qualities which may have almost unlimited influence for good in the development of mankind. The more every one of us can cultivate them in his own life the better for

himself and for the world. Inability to see the moral issue, and hesitation in making the decisions are responsible for much of the sin of the false standard which we discussed in Chapter II. Next to goodwill there is nothing more needed in moral affairs than the truly scientific mind. But the great value of this is found in the individual life. It is as a man criticises his own conduct, recognises where the real moral issue lies for himself, grasps the newer and truer standard and tests himself by it, that he most helps in the progress of the world. And such an one is able both by example and precept to influence others for good.

All this does not involve any reaction against other people. It is all a necessary part of that working for the aim which we discussed in Chapter III. It is when the critical faculty is turned from the study of principles, methods and aims, to the study of persons that it becomes questionable how far it is of value. Yet even in this sphere some forms of its exercise appear to be wholly good. And to these we must now turn.

They may be referred to collectively as judgments upon persons, the chief feature of which is *not* a moral verdict.

They are generally decisions regarding the suitability of particular people for specific purposes. There are many cases where it is quite necessary to judge about a person's

capabilities. For instance an employer must thus judge the various applicants for a vacant post. He must consider which man is most likely to be able to do properly the work demanded of him. And this means a careful investigation of what he has done in times past, and how he has done it. It may also be necessary to inquire into the applicant's moral character. For to put an unsuitable man into a place is apt to bring trouble and difficulty to every one connected with it, the man himself included. Similar necessity for judgment of persons occurs in every sphere of life. Judgment regarding suitability must be expressed on one who wants to join a society, or a church. It is necessary in the choice of a companion, a partner, or a husband or wife. We are bound to exercise it in choosing a professional adviser, a lawyer, doctor or scientific expert. In all such cases we cannot get away from the judgment of persons. And in this is often involved a certain moral judgment. But as long as suitability is the chief question at issue, moral judgment can be and ought to be kept in the background.

Closely allied to this is that judgment of persons which is necessary in education. The good teacher is always a judge of character. He must see what motives work in each child, and try to discover why they work. He must be able to some extent to read the minds of

those under his care in order that he may understand their conduct. He must exercise judgment in these ways in order that he may the more effectively influence them for good. For his business is not only to supply children with information, but to help to develop their latent possibilities, by suggesting the peculiar studies or employments for which each has most aptitude. In short, because his work is to help to form character, he must be able to judge character.

Thus, too, the doctor must judge not only his patient's disease, but his character and his mind, if he is to be able to give him the best advice. And ministers and others, who endeavour to care for the souls of people, must obviously judge character. In the same way those who have committed to them the reformation of wrong-doers, even when all thought of retribution has been eliminated, must be good judges of character, if their efforts are to be successful.

In all these ways judgment of persons seems to be necessary. It is necessary because it helps the person judged to be his best and to gain his right place in the community. And thus it makes directly for the achievement of the Christian Aim. This is its justification, and there can be no other. But it is to be noticed that such forms of judgment may easily degenerate into harmful forms, if the true aim is not consistently kept in view,

or if insufficient care and patience are exercised by the one who judges. Thus evil may result if one judges another's fitness for a piece of work merely in order to gain for one's self and without any regard to his development. Education, too, will be vitiated if the good of the children and that of the whole community is made subservient to the gain of some one class or section. And the reformation of criminals would cease if the would-be reformers attempted to make them into cheap slaves instead of into free, useful citizens. It is obvious too that judgments of character carelessly formed on insufficient evidence may have most disastrous consequences.

We come now to the third class of judgments—judgments whose chief feature is a moral verdict. The judgments so far discussed involved neither condemnation nor disapprobation. They were all concerned with suitability. If a person was judged unsuitable for some work or position, no blame was attached. He was presumably suitable for something else. But it is very easy to pass from a judgment of unsuitability into a moral condemnation. Because the man is not fitted to do the work to which we have put him, we are very apt to regard him as a bad man. Because the child shows no aptitude at the lessons it is taught, we are apt to regard it as naughty.

No one will doubt that judgment of this kind, in which moral approbation or disapprobation of persons is expressed, is often bad. We have too much of it in the world. What we have to discover is when, and under what circumstances, the passing of such moral verdicts upon people is good. And this will best be done if we first consider wherein their evil lies. For clearness it will be well also to confine our discussion to adverse moral verdicts. For it is them that we have chiefly in mind. We ask then, is the passing of moral verdicts upon persons good?—Is it good for the one condemned?—Is it good for the one who condemns?—Is it good for society generally? Let us consider the case of the one condemned first. Most people assume that to express moral disapprobation of the doer of an evil deed is necessary in order to bring him to repentance. But whether it can have any such effect or no, depends upon the state of mind of the evil-doer.*

We saw in Chapter II. that many of the most evil deeds are done by people who think they are doing right; and that even of those that are generally acknowledged as wrong, the doers have frequently persuaded themselves that *in their case, because of exceptional*

* This is of course not the only factor to be considered. The attitude of other people towards him has a great influence on his reformation.

circumstances, the deed was right. In neither of these two classes will an adverse moral verdict or a denunciation be likely to be of value towards reforming the evil-doer. The evil-doer of the first class will probably be utterly unable to see that he was wrong. He did as he believed was right. You blame him. But that to him only proves that your ideas of right and wrong are very defective. If he is to be brought to see the evil of his deed, and to repent it he must not be denounced for it, or condemned for it. Rather some proof must be presented to him that his *standard* was wrong. For example it would have been no good for any zealous moral reformer to condemn an Inquisitor for his cruelty. The latter would have justified his deeds, and regarded them as meritorious, and would probably have suspected of heresy the one who passed judgment upon him. Or at the present day, what effect do the denunciations of the Socialist have upon the Capitalist or Landowner? Upon their consciences, in nine cases out of ten certainly none. They are acting upon their accepted standard of morality. The Socialist may inspire them with hatred and detestation of himself and his principles, and possibly with fear of what may come should the common people accept his views. But such sentiments do not tend towards their adoption of a truer standard. What they need is rather to

grasp how the system which is enriching them necessarily impoverishes others. But denunciations seldom help them to see that. They often cloud the issue.

Again, one whose evil deed has been done under circumstances which to his mind justify it, is not likely to be aroused to repentance by strongly expressed condemnation, any more than by punishment. He is convinced that he did right. What he needs is not to be condemned as a sinner, but to be convinced that *even in his circumstances the deed was wrong*. But the attempt to show this to him is not likely to be very successful unless it is combined with a full and generous recognition that he believed he was doing right. The deed may be condemned, but his intention, being good, must be approved as such.

There remain the cases in which the deed is done knowing it to be evil, and those in which it is done without thought. In the former what is most needed is sympathetic help. For passion or habit, which binds the sinner to his sin, are what prevent reformation. Often an evil-doer of this class sincerely desires to reform, but cannot. Here condemnation may be of value, because long use may have blinded the sinner to the greatest evil of his sin, and he must be stirred up to strive against it. Thus to call his drunkenness the beastly thing it really is may be a part

of what is necessary to reform the drunkard. But such condemnation must not go alone. It must always be combined with sympathy and helpful friendship, if it is to have any chance of producing reformation. Otherwise it may make matters worse by intensifying the tendency to despair, which is always found in habitual sinners and in those who have given way to passion.

The latter class consists of those who have done evil without thinking whether it was good or evil. Some of these are thoughtless, reckless and apparently regardless of any one but themselves. To such the expressed disapprobation of society may be of value. It at once brings them up against the fact that other people ought to be considered. But here again unless this disapprobation is mixed with a real and obvious care for their welfare, and a painstaking attempt to explain to them the wrongness of their action, it is likely only to confirm them in their reckless way of life. But these reckless characters are not produced suddenly. They probably all develop out of those whose training and surroundings have been defective. Their faults have not been checked in youth, and good outlets for their energy have not been provided. Others—and probably the majority of evil-doers, begin thus—without being ill-intentioned are simply thoughtless, and in their thoughtlessness do something wrong. If caught and punished,

they are frequently hardened and often pass into the class of habitual criminals. If they escape all censure, their first natural shock at the sight of the evil they have done passes away, and they may continue to grow in recklessness. Or sometimes, in favourable circumstances, they may reform. But if the seriousness of their wrong-doing is pointed out, and they are clearly shown that they ought not to have done it, but at the same time are helped to reform, and not disgraced, the probability of their becoming good and useful citizens is very high indeed. This is in fact exactly the type of wrong-doer with which the Probation System has proved so successful. And censure mixed with systematic care is its method.

We then see that while with the greater number of wrong-doers an adverse moral verdict is of little or no value, in many cases it has a certain value, *provided that it is combined with sympathy and help towards reformation*. And that *its value is not in the fact that it is a judgment passed upon persons, but in that it is a judgment passed upon deeds, habits or intentions*. And that its efficacy depends upon the evil-doer himself being induced by sympathy and reasoned appeal to unite in the judgment. He must see that his act was wrong. Then he condemns it and himself for doing it, and thereby lays the foundation of his repentance and reformation.

We must next consider what effect passing moral judgments upon persons has upon the one who judges. It is often said that it is poor-spirited, mean, and almost immoral to refrain from censuring people who have been guilty of gross immorality or cruelty. It appears to be supposed that such an attitude can only be the result of a low moral standard, and even sometimes is a symptom of a sneaking leaning towards similar wrong doing. Now, without denying that some people may refrain from the condemnation of evil-doers on such grounds, it must be pointed out that many other and more adequate reasons may lead one to take that attitude. If, for example, any one has come to the conclusion to which we have just come, that in the majority of cases condemnation has no good effect upon evil-doers, he might well make the resolution never to condemn any one until he saw some probability that his condemnation might do good. This would entirely prevent him joining in those choruses of denunciation of some flagrantly evil-doer, which we sometimes hear. He would say, "I am not in a position to be able to give sympathetic help to this man, so my condemnation of him can do no good. I therefore refuse to judge." Again another might refuse to judge because he believed that all the facts were not known, and that things might come to light which would be certain to modify the general con-

demnation. Or he might refuse to judge on the general ground that he was incompetent to do so; and that judging others tends to breed a wrong attitude to life, a censorious and haughty spirit, which is bad for all parties.

All these are perfectly valid reasons for refusing to judge. We are at present more particularly concerned with the last—that we are unfitted to judge, and are morally damaged by judging. The moral damage wrought by judging others on the one who judges is a fact to which too little attention is generally paid. The act of judging conveys a certain sense of moral superiority and elevation, which is pleasant, and tickles one's vanity. But there are few people who can experience this without suffering thereby. It is a cheap and valuless superiority. The evil-doer is condemned, and in his condemnation one's own comparatively speaking blameless life is implicitly contrasted. But this is unreality, for we know that our lives are not blameless. And we are in need of a greater awareness of our own faults and failings rather than to have our eyes fixed upon those of others. It seems then, that judgment of others can scarcely ever be exercised without producing spiritual pride, unless we can avoid the suggestion of contrast between ourselves and those judged. This is almost impossible, and probably can only be avoided by making our

condemnation a judgment rather of the deed than the doer, and coupling with it such self-analysis as discloses to us the imperfection of our own life. *Unless we are habitually judging ourselves by the strictest standard we know, we cannot but suffer morally when we judge others.*

(2) Again, judgment has a bad effect on the one who judges, because he is never in a position to pass a judgment of desert upon any one's conduct. And to judge habitually on insufficient grounds, is to cut at the roots of clear and correct thinking. This is one reason why we find the most ignorant people are often the most ready to judge others, while those who have cultivated the scientific mind are often extraordinarily cautious in such judgments. For the latter are aware that a great number of factors go to making a correct judgment possible. It is not merely that we seldom or never know all the facts (using the word " facts " to mean the outward happenings) which bear upon the evil-deed and its doer. Though even in that sphere circumstances of which we know nothing, might, if known, greatly modify our judgment of the evil-doer's guilt. There are the even more important facts of the moral and spiritual environment of the evil-doer. These may have been such as to blunt his moral sense to such an extent, that deeds which appear, and rightly appear, horrible to us, may have been easy to him.

Unless, therefore, we know all the relevant facts, both outward and inward, we cannot possibly be certain of being fair in our judgments. And this not only means that we shall therefore do harm and not good to the one we judge, but also that we shall run great danger of corrupting our own powers of judgment, and with them our moral and spiritual life. Habitually judging other people not only forms the odious habit of censoriousness, but at the same time, because it is mostly carried on on insufficient evidence, increases the obliquity of our moral sense.

And this moral obliquity, while it is increased by judging on inadequate evidence, is present in any case to a greater or less degree in all of us. Unless we have always promptly obeyed the dictates of conscience, acting up to the best standard we know, and constantly seeking to gain the truer and higher standard, there must be sin, moral failure, in our own lives. And when that is there our clearness of moral judgment is bound to be injured. Until by rigid self-criticism and persistent endeavour to eradicate our own imperfections, we have gained perfect moral insight, we cannot expect to be able to condemn others. This is of course what Jesus meant, when He said, "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" We none of us have clearness of

moral vision because we none of us have perfect purity of moral life. Therefore, *the first and most important exercise of the judging faculty for all of us is self-judgment.*

Because then we are not fitted to judge others, and judging them tends to produce moral deterioration in ourselves, we ought to refrain from doing so, unless the good of others seems imperatively to require it. Nor must we be too easily ready to suppose that judging is necessary for the good of others. Let us put ourselves in their place, asking ourselves how often adverse judgments upon us have been for our good. If such have seldom or never helped us, is it not possible that some other and more certain way may be found to help other people?

Again, what is the effect of judging upon society at large? Does it help to produce that mutual understanding, that spirit of give and take, and that large-hearted generosity, that must be present if harmonious development is to take place? The answer is certainly, "No." Judging has an opposite tendency. It chokes the springs of spontaneity; it breeds uneasiness; it creates bad feeling, and it rapidly reproduces itself. A judging spirit in one member of a group very quickly produces a judging habit in all; and in a short time results in general censoriousness. This easily degenerates into tale-bearing and detraction; it leads to a cynical outlook on

life, which imputes low motives to everyone. It was probably the perception of this odious growth of the judging spirit which caused our Lord to give as the first ground for not judging, that those who judge are themselves judged. If all those who profess to follow Him were to carry out His injunction, "Judge not," the advance in mutual understanding and good-fellowship would be enormous, because a great check would have been imposed on the growth of censoriousness.

We see, therefore, that judgment of others, in the sense of moral condemnation, is harmful to the world at large. It turns the milk of human kindness sour. It is harmful to the one who judges. It breeds in him a most undesirable spirit of pride and censoriousness, and it corrupts his moral life. And it generally is harmful to the person judged. It is indeed a fact that when mixed with sympathy it may do good to certain classes of evil-doers. But even this forms no real exception to the general rule that it is bad. For it is only of value even in these cases, in so far as it is a judgment of the act rather than of the person.

This general conclusion is confirmed not only by the teaching, but by the example of Jesus Christ. We never find Him condemning those who were generally regarded as sinners. It was one of the chief indictments brought against Him by His religious opponents, that

He associated with sinners. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." Whether it was the profiteering publican, whose riches were unfairly gained by the ruin of his poorer brethren, or the common prostitute whom all the respectable condemned, they received from Him forgiveness and the inspiration for a new life, but never condemnation. In fact, He explicitly and openly refused to condemn. He does indeed appear to have condemned one class of people, those who made a great profession of religion, and who set themselves up as judges of others. But obviously the only safe way in which we can take Christ's denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees as exemplary to us, is to exercise careful and thorough self-judgment. *For we are much more like them than like Him who judged them.* When we are perfectly like Christ in our attitude to all men, we may safely denounce the hypocrites. Till then to do so would be positively humorous, if it were not so tragic.

Our moral reaction against sin must rather be, on the one hand, stern self-criticism, and on the other hand helping those on whom sin brings suffering.* And it is sympathy rather than censure, love rather than sternness, that is needed in this work. Precept and reproof may be necessary, but the precept must be reinforced by example and the reproof must

* The sinner is included in this class.

be mixed with understanding and helpfulness, or neither will succeed. And here again Jesus Christ is our example. There are remarkable words in John's Gospel about Him judging, and yet it is emphatically stated that He does not judge; that the purpose of His coming was not to judge. How can Christ both judge and not judge; both be sent to judge and not be sent to judge? The answer is given clearly and fully in John iii. 17-21: "God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him. He that believeth on Him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the only begotten Son of God. *And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, for their works are evil.* For every one that doeth ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." The judgment here spoken of is no passing of an adverse verdict. It is the exhibition of the true life. Men see that. It condemns their false standards. Some unite with the condemnation, repent and reform. Others shut their eyes and call their evil good. The one condemn themselves and thereby are set upon the way to being justified. The other

justify themselves and thereby involve themselves in condemnation. The intention of Christ then is not to judge, but to save. Yet as men judge themselves by His standard, the work of salvation begins in them. As they refuse to judge themselves, the standards He set condemn them.

If the Christian Church were really fulfilling the work of her Master, the lives of Christians would judge the world, as His life judged it. The expression of disapprobation and condemnation would not even appear necessary. The standard would be exhibited in life. And the salvation of the world would be secured by the Christ-like love and sympathy of Christians which would save both the victims of sin and the sinners.

If we fear that without expression of moral condemnation wrong will triumph, we have the answer in the action of Christ. He set forth the standard in word and deed; He reproved and He encouraged, but He scarcely ever condemned, and He told us not to do it. And we have seen by careful investigation that it is only in certain special circumstances that judging can do good to the one judged, and that in all circumstances it is liable to injure the one who judges, and the world at large. Perhaps then here, as in other cases, we should be wise to reckon that Jesus Christ meant what He said, when He said, "Judge not."

VII

DOMINATION OR SERVICE

In our discussion of the Christian Ideal we have so far given a good deal of attention to the right treatment of evil-doers. This was necessary both because it is the presence of evil-doing which delays the realisation of the Christian Aim, and because to a large extent the usual treatment of evil-doers is contrary to the Christian method, and is making things worse rather than better. But our attitude towards our fellowmen generally is also important. Incidentally in discussing Justice we saw something of what this ought to be. It was pointed out that true Justice could only be done as each person was given what would enable him to make the best of life for the general good. The responsibility of providing this right environment for everyone lies upon the whole community. But that community consists of, and acts through, individuals. And though no doubt a certain proportion of what is needed for each individual can be supplied officially by the community, through organisation and government ; the greater part, and incalculably the more

important part, of the environment of every one depends upon the attitude of other individuals. And it is some elements in this attitude which we now have to discuss.

We are endeavouring to work for the realisation of the Christian Aim, and we desire to influence others to similar endeavour. This aim implies the development of the individual life, combined with the development of the life of the community. And it is not only one individual that is to be developed, but every individual. From this it follows that the development is to be by means of one another, but not at the expense of one another. The self-development of one is not to prevent the self-development of another, but rather to encourage it. No one is solely to subserve another's good, yet every one is so to live that his life, not only is of value to himself, but also makes for the good of others. The ideal implies neither independence, nor dependence, but interdependence.

The question then arises how far it is right for us to attempt to control the lives of others. We cannot avoid in part conditioning the lives of all with whom we have to do. In so far as our lives touch theirs, we affect them, and they affect us. But to control means more than this. It means so definitely to take a position superior to another, as to take a large part of the conduct of his life out of his hands into our own. It means in the

extreme case, to make him our obedient servant, or our unquestioning follower. It means to gain such power over him either moral or material, that we dominate his life. How far is domination good? We must consider what it means.

Domination is essentially the control of the lives of others. It may vary in extent. Sometimes only a part of the life is dominated, and the rest free; sometimes the whole is under control. But it always has one very serious result. If in any part of his life a person is entirely, or almost entirely, controlled by another, his powers of self-control become atrophied by disuse. Where the control is exercised over almost the whole of life, a total lack of initiative is likely to result. When only a portion of life is controlled a stunted and lob-sided development of character is to be expected. In no case can a true development take place. Fortunately we are coming to recognise these bad results of domination in the people dominated. We see that whatever excuses we may make for domination, as for example that those dominated are unfit for self-control, do not go to the root of the matter. For only by being allowed freedom can anyone learn to exercise self-control. And only as men learn self-control can the harmonious development which is the Christian Aim, come about. And it is not as though domination gradually made

people fitter for self-control. Its effect is the very reverse; it keeps them unfit, and not seldom makes them progressively more unfit. Undoubtedly there is truth in the statement often made by the governing classes, that those under their domination are unfit for self-government. It is true that if allowed to control their own lives and manage their own affairs, they would make many mistakes. But we must also remember that even the governing classes make mistakes; that the mistakes in self-government, which those now dominated would make if set free, would be to a considerable extent the result of having been prevented true self-development for so long, and that only by being allowed freedom can anyone become fit to use it.

But the misdevelopment of those who dominate is quite as strong a ground for opposing domination, as is the lack of development of the dominated. Weakness of character, lack of power of judgment, and general waywardness of disposition certainly do not help towards the realisation of the Christian Aim; but over-bearing ways, dictatorialness and bad temper, which are produced in those who dominate, are no less bad, and are, if possible, even less conducive to the Christian Aim. It has been noted that Majors in literature are frequently represented as men apt easily to fly into a passion. They have been accustomed to dominate others.

Their word has been accepted as law, and in consequence any opposition becomes unbearable to them. But dictatorialness and bad temper, while in themselves working against the Christian Aim, are the symptoms of a serious misdevelopment of character, a lack of intellectual analysis, a concentration of thought, care and feeling upon one's self, and an entirely wrong attitude towards others. Because the word of anyone is always obeyed, he comes to regard his word as law, he thinks that all he says is right. But it is not. And every man needs the free expression of opinions by those about him to arouse him to careful and critical thought. When this is lacking he becomes less and less apt to analyse his thoughts and to test his ideas by facts. Thus the dominator gets away from reality. What he does and says is *considered* right, and he soon gets accustomed to supposing it is so. Such a man may at last almost lose the power to see truth, and test himself by it. Domination thus may injure the dominator even more than those he dominates.

Domination then produces in those dominated stunted development; and in those who dominate misdevelopment. By what means are we to get true development? By what attitude to life, and to our fellow men, are we to produce in ourselves and others character that will make for the Christian Aim? It will be of no permanent value

simply to transform those who now are dominated into dominators. The ideal is neither that A should control B, nor that B should control A, but that each should control himself. And this self-control is to be exercised, not merely for his own advantage, but in order to bring about the harmonious co-operation of the whole community, of which both A and B are parts. This can only be done by substituting a different ideal altogether. Every one should aim to serve mankind. This is the meaning of the words of Jesus Christ in which He definitely contrasts domination and service : " Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them ; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But it is not so among you ; but whosoever would be great among you, shall be your servant ; and whosoever would be first among you, shall be slave of all. For verily, the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

It is not difficult to see why Jesus said this. He was aiming at the good of all men. He was standing for universal ideals. But domination is necessarily an ideal for the few. The Dominator does not want any one else to desire to dominate. He wishes to stand alone. He cultivates the *Herrenmoral* of Nietzsche, and it is necessary for his success that others

* Mark x. 42 to 45.

should practise the *Sklaven-moral*. If there is more than one practitioner of the *Herren-moral* a fight is certain. Nietzsche appeared to think that his teaching was something new. But as has well been said, "It is at least as old as Nebuchadnezzar." And as a matter of fact it is far older. It long antedates civilisation. It is the morality of the rival cocks on the dung-hill. It is as old as cock-fighting—and as profitless. But service is a universal ideal. If one desires to serve the whole community, one can have no greater desire than that others shall wish to do so too. And this ideal of service, as set forth by Jesus, makes no one into a dominator. If one serves a single individual and him only, one can scarcely avoid producing in him the desire for domination, and its fruits. But if one serves the individual in the community, and as part of it, one makes no one a dominator, but only encourages service all round. And as Jesus holds Himself up as the model of service, He surely means us to understand that even God Himself does not rule by domination, but by service. So that to seek the Kingdom of God means to establish the rule of universal service.

We shall gain some insight into the Christian way of service if we consider three common forms of Domination and the forms of service which ought to replace them.

I. POLITICAL AND MILITARY OPPRESSION

This consists in the ruling of the many by the few. The few who rule may be an alien race, or they may be merely the governing class, aristocrats or plutocrats. We generally assume that the evil of being ruled by an alien race is greater than that of other forms of oppression. No doubt it is generally much more unpleasant. But in all cases of oppression the essential evil is the same. It is the evil of being prohibited free development. As long as oppression of any sort continues, the Christian Aim cannot be attained, simply because the true self-development which is the basis of all harmonious co-operation is impossible.

Political domination is exercised in two different ways. Some of those oppressed are dominated by force. They are compelled to obey, and may lose their property, and any remnants of freedom that have been left them, and even their lives, if they do not obey. This form of oppression may be called, and on the surface appear, civil and political, but it always rests upon military power, and without that power it could not exist. The other way of political domination depends upon the governed giving their liberties away, and submitting themselves to autocratic rule. It is impossible to imagine an entirely just,

fearless and truth-seeking people doing this. They must have been induced to submit to domination by fear, by misrepresentation, or through some acts of injustice on their part which have given the dominator power over them. But it is the people who are under this second form of political domination, who can be made the instruments by which the first sort is established. No one bad man fired by the ideas of domination could ever establish a military autocracy or a political oppression, unless he could by fear, deceit, or bribery make other men his instruments. An army can only be the instrument of oppression, because the men that form it are themselves victims of oppression. Freedom can be taken from the other men only because some are cowards enough, or deluded enough to surrender their own.*

From this it follows that the first and most necessary form of opposition to domination,

* I believe that the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas, in his booklet *The Immorality of Non-resistance*," is quite wrong on this point. He says : " A writer of fantastic allegories could vividly picture a state of society in which this doctrine [Non-resistance] had become so successful that all the world had become absolute non-resisters, except one armed Lucifer with a ' will to power,' who said ' Evil, be thou my good.' It would then be possible for this one man to destroy the whole of mankind, and cut off the survival on this planet not merely of morality, but of the entire human race." But how could the " Lucifer " do it if no-one would help him, and if everyone used every means short of injury to prevent him ? I am not here concerned to advocate Non-resistance. I merely point out that it is impossible for anyone to establish a domination unless he can induce others to help him to do it.

is to refuse to be an instrument of it. But that alone is not enough. In opposing an established domination, Democracy, urged by fear, is in great danger of setting up or supporting an opposing domination. If it would avoid this disaster its opposition to political oppression must be inspired by the ideal, unselfish and reasonable. It must be inspired by the true ideal, or else it will be merely negative. It must not be content merely to see that Domination is wrong. It must also see the true ideal which is to replace it. It must realise that true freedom can never be built upon each working for himself. That way leads through anarchy back to tyranny. The only firm basis of freedom is mutual service. When the democratic movement is filled with the desire to give, its power will be irresistible, and no domination will stand against it. It must not only have taken as its ideal the world-wide co-operative Commonwealth, but also have grasped the fact that the method of establishing that is service, before it can finally win the day.

It must be unselfish. If its aim is only to rescue itself from servitude, it may succeed in this, but may in its turn become tyrannous. But if its aim be deliberately the good, not of one class or set of people, but of all ; if it sees that both dominator and dominated suffer, and that by service all may prosper, its opposition to domination will no longer be

inspired by hatred of any individuals, but by love to all. It will come as a rescuer, calling on *all men* to be its allies, and regarding only false ideas and wrong systems as its enemies. And this means that it will not depend upon force, but upon reason, to gain its aims. If one is really convinced that any one, whose attitude to life one criticises, is himself suffering by that attitude, one will do everything in one's power to make him see his mistake, and to help him to take up a different attitude. Any attempt forcibly to alter his circumstances would be detrimental to the object one had in view. Therefore, it is by persuasion based upon the inherent reasonableness of its ideals that democracy must advance.

One of the most important ways of showing the reasonableness of its cause is by clearing up misunderstandings. The whole field of politics is full of these. For example nearly all supporters of autocracy denounce democracy as the tyranny of the majority, just as autocracy is the tyranny of the minority. Frequently democrats are led away by this contrast, and answer truly, but inadequately, that tyranny by a majority is better than tyranny by a minority. *But the real meaning of democracy is no tyranny at all.* Its object is not to enforce the will of any section, but to make self-development and self-direction possible for all. If a reasonable spirit were

everywhere cultivated, and the service of the community were held as the ideal of life by the majority, it would be found that general consent rather than majority tyranny would become the basis of most decisions that had to be made. It is because there is at present in political affairs no approach to fundamental justice, but rather various unsatisfactory attempts to tinker at the results of fundamental injustice, that such wide differences in political outlook appear. The more radical and thorough democracy is in its endeavour for justice, the more general consent it will gain. Every one can understand and appreciate the ideal of an equal chance for all. Only the initiated can grasp the rights and wrongs of an ordinary Trade Union dispute. The issue of the latter can be easily obscured, and thus well-intentioned people may be brought to take the wrong side. It is scarcely possible to obscure the issue of the former.

The conversion of public opinion to the side of democracy will be more rapid the more democracy realises and emphasises its root ideals of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and points out their bearing on every question in dispute.

Again, such words as Nationalism, Internationalism, Imperialism, Patriotism, Socialism and Individualism, are liable to cause the most acute division, largely because they

are misunderstood. Domination always stands for Imperialism, and it generally represents itself as standing for Nationalism and Patriotism, and against Internationalism, and for Individualism against Socialism. It thus gains a support from well-intentioned people, which it could never gain if it were seen in its native ugliness. For to stand for one's own nation, to love one's own country, and to desire the development of the individual are all good. But the true ideal of service stands for these things too. The man who holds the Christian Ideal loves his country—none more so. But, because he holds that the World ideally is one community, his love to his own nation implies no hatred to any other. The true interests of all are identical. Each needs the other. He is not a lover of every country but his own; rather he is a lover of his own *and* every other country. It is only because the advocates of so-called Patriotism, either consciously or unconsciously hold a view of life irreconcilable with Christianity, that they can suppose Patriotism to be opposed to love of all men, and Nationalism and Internationalism to be inconsistent with one another. If the interests of all are to be found in co-operation, the good of the whole will require the true development of the individual. Thus Socialism and Individualism are united, but they are opposed to exploitation and domination. Patriotism and

love of humanity join together, but both are opposed to hatred in all its forms. And Nationalism and Internationalism may well co-exist, but both are at variance with Imperialism, for that, both in derivation and in general use, means domination over other races.

By doing straight thinking on such lines as these, and above all by pointing out the utterly untenable basis upon which the whole case for domination rests, namely the idea of clash of interests, the leaders of democracy will do good work towards the establishment of a true Political System. They must show that the interests of all men, groups and nations are identical, for the good of all is to be found in working together. And that therefore it is those who work for that end, that are the true Patriots, the true Nationalists, and the true Individualists, because they are at the same time lovers of Humanity, Internationalists and Socialists.*

* It ought to be pointed out that the misunderstanding caused by these terms is increased in the British Empire by the fact that Imperialism is taken to mean both pride in the wonderful association of free nations formed by Great Britain and the self-governing Colonies ; and pride in the British race dominating India and many uncivilised parts of the world. But the two things are utterly different. The first has no right to be called Imperialism at all. It is the best sample of true Internationalism and free association of peoples which has yet been seen. In ideal it corresponds wonderfully with the Christian Aim. The other is an Imperialism, a domination. And though we may thankfully recognise that it is much better than most imperialsms, it does not escape their fundamental defects.

II. ECONOMIC DOMINATION

In the economic sphere we see the most typically modern form of domination. Multitudes of people who have nothing but condemnation for Political and Military Domination, are exponents of Economic Domination, and are even unable to grasp that it is undesirable. They have been brought up in it. To them competition is a natural law regulating all commercial affairs. The result of this is that in the business world the strong dominate the weak ; and the few grow rich at the expense of the many. The extreme forms of this, sweating and exploitation, when these are clearly seen to ruin the health and endanger the morality of the workers, are generally reprobated. But amongst the ordinary, well-meaning, successful business men the fundamental wrong of the whole system is seldom perceived. They are content to remain in a system which is bound to produce domination and to kill the desire for free service, though they mitigate its severity by charity and doles. This is only because they do not see that its aim and methods are both wrong. It values things more than persons, and thinks the riches of the few more to be desired than the happiness of the many. Democracy can best oppose this form of domination by clearly announcing its aim as the well-being and full development

of all. This is so essentially reasonable and just, that it will gain on all sides a great response. This should be followed by a statement of the true idea of justice which was set forth in a previous chapter, the idea of providing for each what is needed to enable him to develop his life for the general good. From these two ideas the natural inference is that commerce should aim purely at the production of what men need in proportion as they need it ; and that the work required for this should be done by each according to his ability ; by the strong according to his strength, and by the weak according to his weakness. But it is only as the ideal of service is made the ruling idea of life that this can take place. And as that ideal spreads economic domination will vanish.

I believe that the cause of Socialism has been retarded by the insistence of its exponents on certain economic methods by which it is to be brought about, often to the exclusion of the ideals upon which it is based. Those who have been brought up in the present economic system often do not understand what the Socialists are driving at, and in consequence oppose them. If they only more clearly understood the aim, they might then be brought to see that the methods suggested were, if not necessary, certainly likely to be of value. For example, the phrase " the Class war," is often misunderstood. Most

non-socialists think that that is a war instituted by the socialists with the intention of conquering and dominating the present capitalist class. Whereas, really the war is already present, and was instituted by the capitalist class, and through the method of competition, to which they are attached. The Socialist is out not to intensify this class war, but to bring it to an end, by abolishing classes, making capital the possession of the community, and making all men both workers, and enjoyers of the fruits of their labours.

It is by the spread of the opposite idea to domination that this change can be brought about. When the ideal of service of the community becomes the motive power in men's lives the last remnants of economic domination will disappear.

III. INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL DOMINATION

Probably the strength of all other forms of domination is derived from this most deeply seated and intangible form. It is through Intellectual and Spiritual domination that the slave is taught to hug his chains, and the oppressed classes are taught that their lot is divinely ordered, and that to attempt to alter it is to fly in the face of Providence. The basis of Spiritual domination is the idea

of authority in religion. The history of Christianity is a terrible tale of the ravages of such authority. From the time when the greatest scholars in the Greek-speaking Eastern Church accepted a creed, the Greek wording of which they disliked, on the authority of a Latin-speaking, semi-pagan Emperor, authority has been trying to destroy the divine life in Christianity.* The Church began to cast aside the purely spiritual means of advance, love and reason; and allying herself with the State, employed instead force and coercion. Hitherto her power had rested on the truth of her message—the only firm foundation for spiritual power. Now it began to be based more and more upon things irrelevant to truth. And the long story of persecutions in the name of Christ began. And as the Church trusted less and less to the truth of her message, and to the witness of God in men, she found it increasingly necessary to have some absolute authority to which to appeal. And so at last there arose the monstrous dogma of Papal Infallibility. This is the high water mark of spiritual and intellectual domination. But the idea of authority in religion had got such a hold upon the mind of Christendom that even when at the Reformation men began to reject the

* At the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D. What is said here is not meant as a criticism of the creed, but as a criticism of the very unsatisfactory means by which consent was gained for it.

authority of the Infallible Church,* they set up the Bible as an Infallible Authority. And only in the present century is Protestantism escaping from that domination.

The progress of science, in which the essential element is the testing of every theory and generalisation by fact, has enabled men partly to get rid of domination in matters of religion. But even yet the escape from domination is not complete. Many of those who most strongly oppose the authority of Church and Bible, submit themselves with unquestioning and child-like faith to the declarations of scientists. But scientists are not infallible. And when they attempt, as they sometimes do, to make authoritative statements about Religion and Philosophy, in the study of which they are not experts, they often make the most egregious mistakes. It is the *methods* of science that are of value —the experiment, the testing, the basing on verified facts. The statements of scientists upon things they have not studied are of no value at all. Thus, having escaped from the domination of the authority of the Church and the Bible, we must be careful not to bow our necks to the authority of those whose right to exercise it is even less.

We escape from the domination of authority

* Papal Infallibility was not a dogma of the Church till centuries later. But long before the Reformation the Infallibility of the Church was a widely spread belief, which was used by ecclesiastics to dominate the mass of men.

by the service of truth. Each man, because he is a man, has within himself the power of judging and the Divine spark, the inward voice, which, *if he obeys it*, will lead him to truth. But this does not make him infallible, and fit him to dominate others. For no one knows everything, nor does anyone so entirely correctly follow the promptings of the inward monitor that he is freed from possibility of error. Everyone must, as Jesus said, judge for himself what is right. The final decision is in his own conscience, between himself and God. But in coming to every decision he is bound to use all means of testing that are open to him. And here the authorities, which as absolute dominating authorities we have rightly discarded, have a place and a function. Science is not to be followed as an absolute guide, but her methods are to be used, and the results accepted until further investigation amends them. The Bible, as a record of those who heard God's voice and obeyed it, must be constantly used as a guide to truth. And the Church, the consensus of opinion of the Saints, must ever be a corrective of individual judgment. But none of these may rightly dominate the mind of any man. When he has canvassed all opinions, if the facts and the Divine illumination within him lead him to a decision differing from that of tradition, he must boldly but humbly take his stand upon what he believes to be the truth. That alone

may dominate him. But his decision, while it may have to be given to others, must never be forced upon them. A prophet the truth-seeker may be, a dominator he must not be.

Spiritual domination, because it is the deepest seated of all dominations, retains its hold with far greater tenacity than any other. Men from time to time discover, as at the Reformation, that some supposedly infallible authority is not infallible, but the tendency to set up another infallible authority in its place is strong. How often the reformer with real spiritual insight has tried to teach the duty of private judgment, and has only succeeded in being himself elevated into a dominating authority! The false gods of absolute authority take it in turns to rule mankind, because men will not recognise that the true God, the God of the truth, desires every man to think for himself. It therefore behoves all, who endeavour to overthrow domination, to see to it that they do not dominate others, but rather that they teach men to discover truth for themselves. And in doing this we may learn from the methods of the modern educationist. The object of education is to convey information, establish ideals, and to cultivate the power of thought. The old type of teacher endeavoured to do all this by the method of domination. What he said was true because he said it; his ideas were the only true ones, and to think truly

was to think as he thought. The success of this method even in imparting knowledge was not great, and it provided pupils with a set of prejudices rather than ideas, for it killed rather than stimulated thought. The modern teacher puts aside all attempt to dominate his pupil. He is rather a friend and helper, who endeavours to interest the child in the things he ought to learn, and teaches him how to find out for himself. He puts his ideals forward as what seem to him rational and true, and encourages the pupil to test for himself. And so all through he helps the child to form habits of correct thinking as well as to gain information. In this the modern teacher has discovered the true way of education. It is the way of service instead of the way of domination.

And all the greater teachers of the past used the same method. They inspired, they stirred up the intellect of their pupils, and developed their minds. And this is supremely true of Jesus Christ. The characters of all who became His pupils were most wonderfully developed. And however much the dead hand of tradition in the Church may have repressed individual developmnet, wherever the living presence of Christ has been felt, new and intense life has sprung up, and people have grown. This is because He does not dominate but serve.

And now when the need is for a new world

with better ideals and a truer outlook upon life, those who have seen something of what the Christian Ideal is, must also take the way of service in establishing it. This means that they will not work much by open opposition to those who dominate, whether politically, or in the economic sphere. For there is always danger of opposition to domination establishing a counter-domination. But rather their endeavour will be, as servants of truth and of their fellow-men, to set forth the true ideals of life, relying upon the response of the divine voice in man to all that is true and good.

VIII

TOLERATION AND TRUTH

The attitude suggested in the preceding chapters will appear to many minds too tolerant of evil. Some will no doubt think that by it error will be encouraged and truth be disregarded. It is, therefore, important that we should discuss the scope of Toleration, and its relation to zeal for truth, discovery of truth, and advocacy of truth.

The name "toleration" is sometimes given to what is nothing more than mental and moral inertia. When this is so there is nothing to be said for it. But we do well to recognise that such mere "easy-goingness" does not deserve the name "toleration," and is very different from true toleration in its origin, methods and results. It arises from lack of care about the matter in question; its method is to do nothing at all, and its result is on all sides a weakening of moral conviction, and a loss of power to grasp moral principles. How different the true principle of toleration is from this will appear in our further discussion.

Many people are unable to understand toleration of what they think harmful. Their

mental attitude seems to be that what they hold is truth; that those, therefore, whose views are widely different, or incompatible, hold falsehood, and should be prohibited from expressing their opinions. If it is not opinions but actions that are in dispute, their conviction is, that it is their duty, so far as lies in their power, to prevent others doing anything which seems to them wrong. It is their belief that wherever there is real conviction there must be intolerance; and that all toleration is a mark of lack of zeal for truth, and of moral debility. I have heard this position defended in a way which clearly implied the rigorous suppression of all unorthodox ideas, and the consequent suffering of those who advocated them. If any of the new or unorthodox ideas were true, then truth would, so the advocate of intolerance said, be *demonstrated* by the heroic sufferings of those who held them.

This idea of the necessity and usefulness of intolerance appears to me to be wrong from beginning to end; and in particular the suggestion that truth is in any way *demonstrated* by the constancy of those who suffer for it, is a dangerous fallacy. There is almost no type of doctrine in religion or morals which has not had its martyrs. Heretics have held as bravely to their heresies as the orthodox to the true Faith. Catholics and Protestants have been equally staunch and immovable.

And Mohammedans have not been less devoted to their religion than have Christians in times of persecution. It is not the truth of a faith or of a conviction, which is proved by the constancy of its martyrs, but their belief in it. The truth of anything can only be proved by its congruence with fact, and its tendency to enrich and develop human society. For this process of proof patience, careful investigation and unprejudiced observation and experiment are above all things needed. And these require a temper of mind the very opposite of that engendered by intolerance.

What then precisely do we mean by toleration? It is defined in the dictionary as: "(1) Allowance given to that which is not wholly approved. (2) The recognition of the right of private judgment in matters of faith and worship. (3) A disposition not to deal or judge harshly in cases of difference of opinion and conduct."

These three definitions are not entirely synonymous; but taken together they fairly cover the ground. The first is concerned with governments and people in authority, who are in a position to forbid, and do not. The second is a special, but exceedingly important case of toleration. And the third represents what toleration generally is in the individual. This third definition also is most fundamental, because it is by the growth of a right *disposition* that right action will be

assured. And in the end the commands and prohibitions of states are expressions of the temper of mind of their citizens.

It will be seen from these definitions that toleration does not mean simply easy-goingness and lack of interest in, or concern about, the matter at issue. Above all it does not mean indifference, or lack of opposition. In fact it is only when a certain opposition is predicated that the word toleration properly applies. If anyone does deeds or advocates opinions which I approve, or to which I am indifferent, it is a misuse of language to call me tolerant. It is only when I disapprove that I can be tolerant. Only when my opinion is contrary to his can I be said to tolerate the opinion of another. Otherwise I agree with him, or tend to his view, or am indifferent. Similarly, only when I think his act wrong or mistaken can I tolerate it. *Without opposition there is no toleration.*

We have to notice an important distinction between the toleration of ideas and the toleration of acts. As we have seen, anything is good or evil according as it benefits or harms the world-wide community. But ideas and acts affect the community in very different ways. No doubt an evil idea is capable of doing vastly more harm than is an evil act. The latter can at worst destroy bodily life in a limited number of persons. The former may poison minds to an indefinite extent, and

thus cause an almost infinite series of wrong acts.

It might then naturally be assumed that the case for toleration of ideas would be less strong than that for the toleration of acts. But as a matter of fact the reverse is true. For the grounds for toleration in the two cases are different. This arises from the nature and idea and act. An evil act, injury to persons, damage to property, stealing, and so forth, harms the one to whom it is done, apart from any action on his part. A man may be set upon and robbed or beaten, and be quite unable to prevent his injurer harming him. But wrong ideas cannot harm in this direct way. It is only with his own co-operation that an evil idea can harm anyone.* When one adopts an evil idea as one's own, or pays attention to it, and dallies with it, then, and only then, can it begin to injure one. And if one is quite convinced that the idea is false, this does not happen. *Ideas can only injure one as one assents to them, acts injure irrespective of one's state of mind.*

From this it follows that the toleration of acts and toleration of ideas are different problems, and must be separately considered. If we arrive at the conclusion that wide toleration should be extended to both, it

* The limiting case is that of the child whose unformed mind at once grasps as true all that is presented to it. Until then a start has been made in education, shielding from what one regards as false ideas is right for children.

will not necessarily be on the same grounds. If we decide that toleration of acts has very different limits from toleration of ideas, there will be no inconsistency in the conclusion.

I. TOLERATION OF IDEAS

We take first the toleration of ideas, because it is the larger and more important problem. Those who suppose that on all questions, which anyone thinks important, he will be intolerant, regard intolerance as a mark of zeal for truth. A man holds certain ideas, because he believes them to be true. He therefore opposes others, which are contrary to these, because he believes them to be false. This is no doubt true of everyone who has strong convictions. But to oppose false ideas, and to advocate true ones, does not necessarily imply intolerance. Intolerance means more than opposition. And toleration does not imply absence of opposition. In fact toleration, as we saw, is meaningless unless a certain opposition be predicated. Intolerance means not only opposition to, but the attempt to prohibit the expression of, false ideas. Toleration does not mean agreement with, or indifference to false ideas, but a recognition of their falsity and a consequent opposition to them, combined with a strong determination to allow those who hold them to propagate them. It was a

truly tolerant man who wrote to his opponent; "I wholly disapprove of what you say—and will defend to the death your right to say it."

There are many people who cannot oppose an idea without desiring to prevent people from expressing it. But their conduct in the matter is neither the only possible, nor the ideal. No doubt they suppose that they are animated by a love of truth. But there is much to be said for the view that they are really animated by a profound distrust of truth. For they appear to think that truth is too weak to fight her own battles.

What is truth? It must, I think, be defined in the moral sphere, as those ideas and principles of conduct, which are in accord with reality and those methods and ways of living, which will work for the developing harmony of the human race. In other words truth is what is in accord with the nature of things, and therefore falsehood is what is out of accord with the nature of things. Truth is what really *is*. Falsehood is what at bottom *is not*. From this it must follow that falsehood cannot in the end overcome truth. Nor can it overcome it at all, except when truth is not published. If it be objected that we often find falsehood triumphant, the answer is that in such cases truth has either not yet been discovered, or has been silenced, or is proclaimed by so few people or so inadequately, that it gets no

hearing. And the remedy for this state of things is not to prohibit the publication of falsehood, but to encourage the search for and publication of truth. It is not by intolerance, but by toleration, that we may hope for the spread of truth.

Again, no one is omniscient. The tolerant man in his toleration assumes this. He is ready to give a hearing to all sides, and to encourage others to do so too, knowing that thereby new facts may come to light and new points of view be presented, which may be needed in the development of knowledge. The intolerant man, on the other hand, while he would no doubt repudiate the imputation, acts as though he thought he was omniscient. He is assuming, in his desire to suppress that with which he disagrees, that there is no little grain of truth mixed with the error he combats ; that the thing that seems so clear to him, may not really be very different when viewed in the light of fuller knowledge. He is assuming not only that he holds the truth, but that he holds all of it, and has nothing more to learn. Yet it is the experience of almost every careful thinker that he learns a great deal from the opinions of those with whom he disagrees. Sometimes by considering their opinions he discovers truth, which he has neglected, and which is not really contradictory, but complementary to that which he already strongly holds. Some-

times a more careful study of their errors, and a fuller grasp of their point of view, false though it be, gives him a clearer insight into the truth which they are opposing. And sometimes he finds that what they hold is truth, and not falsehood, as he had supposed. In any case the result to him of the exercise of patient toleration is a fuller and clearer view of truth. And the method which enriches him, is obviously the method to recommend for others.

May we not indeed say that there must be a natural affinity between the mind of man and truth; and that where error prevails it must be because some piece of truth inheres in it, and the fuller truth has not yet been brought to light? For if man is God's creature in God's world, it is inconceivable that error could have persistency unmixed with truth.

And in several spheres of life we may trace how the element of truth mixed with error has been the cause of the vitality of the error. And conversely how the element of error, or apparent or supposed error, mixed with a new truth, has been what has delayed its acceptance. Thus in the sphere of theology there used to be amongst a certain section of the Evangelical School a strong objection to the doctrine that God is the Father of all men. And this in spite of the fact that only a violent method of exegesis can remove this

doctrine from the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels. Such a denial of the Universal Fatherhood of God appears to most Christians now as a terrible falsehood, and moreover as one capable of doing almost unlimited harm. Ought we then to be intolerant to those who hold it? Ought we to try to silence them? No. For their adherence to this error is accounted for by a zeal for truth, a truth which they supposed that those who hold the doctrine of Universal Fatherhood had forgotten. Many of them believed that those who preached a universal love and Fatherhood were minimising the seriousness of sin. This was sometimes true, and thereby a great truth was prevented gaining the acceptance it deserved, by an admixture of error. It was a fragment of truth that caused the perpetuation of error; and a fragment of error that prevented the acceptance of truth. And the state of things continued mainly because there was an element of intolerance on each side. For neither party showed much willingness truly to understand the position of the other. If a real toleration had been present, the division caused by divergent opinion could neither have been so acute nor so lasting; and the grasp of truth on both sides would have been greater. In fact there would have ceased to be two sides; instead there would have been real unity in the truth.

Again in the political sphere a similar state of things frequently prevails. The desire for law and order, which are good things,* often leads to the support of autocracy and tyranny, which are bad. Love of one's own country is good ; but it easily degenerates into hatred of other countries, Imperialism and Militarism, which are bad. But the naked evils of tyranny or Militarism would never be supported by well-meaning people. Each is accepted for the good, law and order, or love of country, which it seems to carry with it, and which to many minds is inseparable from it.

It is therefore of vast importance that our opposition to what is evil, be not such as to lead to the impression that we would destroy the good that attaches to it, and in many minds bulks more largely than the evil we recognise. We must be tolerant, and by methods of reason and persuasion make clear to others the higher truth which conserves all the good, but is uncontaminated with evil. And this we can only do as we are ready sympathetically to understand the opposing point of view, and recognise what element of truth is in it.

Toleration of ideas is then to be practised for two chief reasons. First, that the truth on any subject is seldom wholly and fully

* This is only generally true. There are bad laws and bad states of order.

grasped by any one person or party. And second, that in every complex idea there is likely to be some admixture of truth and falsehood. It therefore follows that only by a wide toleration, involving the encouragement of full expression of opinion, are we likely to be able to advance towards clear and full truth.

Error and falsehood are like smoke and fog. You can keep them out by means of closed doors and windows. But you cannot get rid of them by such means. It is only as the breezes of heaven and the pure sunshine enter that they can be dissipated. When a room is tightly shut up, fog and smoke are excluded, but so is the fresh air. And if the inmates avoid being stifled with fog, they are likely to suffer as seriously from foul air. This is almost a complete parallel to what we have been discussing. Intolerance may keep out error, new errors anyway. But it also keeps out truth, all new truth; and, moreover, it is a choice breeding ground for that terrible form of error, perverted and one-sided truth. Only by means of wide open windows can you secure a healthy atmosphere in your room. Only by toleration can you secure intellectual truth. But we may go further than our parallel. There are times, in thick heavy weather, when fog must be excluded, because there is no fresh breeze to drive it away. But in the intellectual sphere the fogs are

manufactured by intolerance, so that you cannot shut them out. You only shut them in. God's light and truth can dissipate any fog of intellectual perversion, but not if they are forbidden by intolerance to enter.

The necessity for toleration is seen also if we look at the question from the point of view of the Christian Aim. It is only by personal development of every individual in a harmonious community that that ideal can be realised. But to prohibit expression of ideas inhibits personal development in the intellectual and in part in the moral sphere. For it is as we express our ideas and compare them with those of other people, that our power of correct thinking expands. And the truest morality consists not in obeying commands or rules, but in judging for one's self and choosing one's way of life on the basis of well considered principles. And this can only take place properly in an atmosphere of toleration. Furthermore, intolerance perpetuates domination, and prevents that free giving of one's self for the good of all, which is essential to true development.

Toleration of ideas does not then imply any lack of care for truth. Rather it is a necessary part of any intelligent devotion to truth and belief in its power. On the other hand it implies no refusal to express disagreement with, and at times condemnation of, false ideas. What it does imply is a

refusal to prohibit their expression, or to prevent it by any other means than by the inherent power of truth. For the truly tolerant man is convinced that falsehood can never be overcome but by truth, and he therefore bends all his energies to the search for and propogation of truth, knowing that in so doing he need have no fear of error, provided toleration is maintained.

II. TOLERATION OF ACTIONS

As pointed out already toleration of actions comes into a different category from toleration of ideas, because the harm done by actions is direct and certain, and is not generally dependent on any act of will on the part of those to whom they are done. And this means that the only way to render evil deeds harmless is to prevent them being committed. The harm of evil ideas may be neutralised by the spread of true ideas. Evil acts are bound to harm society. From this it might be inferred that we ought to be intolerant towards the *doers* of evil, and though this is not exactly the truth, it is true that we ought to prevent evil deeds being done. How this prevention is to be effected still remains to be decided. For many methods which have been honestly adopted with the intention of preventing evil deeds, have resulted on balance in an increase of evil, as our study of punish-

ment shows. The occasion, the method and the spirit of prevention are of great importance. And we must remember all through that every interference with the liberty of another person is a serious matter. . Not that it is never necessary, but that it should only be undertaken with adequate cause, and when there is reasonable expectation that it will really prevent evil being done, and tend to the true development of the person interfered with.

Furthermore, before contemplating any methods of prevention, other than persuading the would-be doer that the deed is wrong, we must learn to distinguish between what there is really adequate ground for calling evil, and what, either from prejudice, or on æsthetic grounds we personally dislike. Many people find this distinction very difficult to make, and such are thereby disqualified from interfering with the liberty of others, though they often do it. If we are going to take upon ourselves, either as individuals, or as representatives of the community, the responsibility of preventing other people doing what they want to, we ought to be very certain, not only that we think the act in question wrong, but also why we think it wrong, and what precisely is the evil to which it will give rise. Finally, it is necessary to point out that punishing one who does wrong is not the same as preventing wrong being done, and

only in certain circumstances does it even result in a diminution of evil doing.

The true way of preventing all evil is to cut it off at the source. Our concern then is not so much with acts, as with persons who do them, states of mind that lead to them, and circumstances that favour their perpetration. To forbid an act, but to leave untouched the circumstances which tend to produce it, where these are alterable, is folly.

There seem to be four chief sources of actions injurious to the community : Ill-will ; perverted moral standards ; sudden gusts of passion ; and accident and carelessness. In all these the only certain means of prevention is to cut off at the source. Actions, which spring from ill-will can only be fully prevented when ill-will is transformed into good-will. And the chief agencies for this are the spread of truth and the expression of good-will in our own conduct. Similarly actions which spring from perverted standards can only be entirely prevented when true ideals are accepted. Therefore, in this case again the spread of truth is the most important factor. Sudden gusts of passion may always lead to evil acts and the general practice of self-control alone can completely eliminate them. In the same way only by greater general carefulness can accidental evil-doing be abolished.

Is the effort to raise the moral tone and to

establish the right standards of conduct all that can be done? Is no more immediate action useful? Other action is in some cases desirable, but it does not occupy nearly so important a place as has generally been supposed. For the moral change is the one final and entirely satisfactory means of preventing evil acts. Everything else is more or less a temporary make-shift, or a mere matter of external organisation.

Thus one who has done wrong in a fit of passion, unless he were also animated by persistent ill-will, which is often not the case, is likely to be sorry for what he has done, and especially if it has been of a really serious nature, heartily to repent of his passion. To such a man punishment or restraint will generally do no good. Restraint, if it could have been exerted before his wrong act, might indeed have prevented it. But in nine cases out of ten that is impossible. And restraint after the act is only shutting the stable door when the horse has gone. In fact restraint or punishment is only likely to embitter the passionate man. He needs our understanding sympathy and help to overcome his passion. Beyond this, and the general cultivation of self-control, all that can be done is to remove as far as possible out of the way of such people instruments with which harm can be done. If passionate men carry arms, they are liable to commit murder.

If they have only their fists or a chance stick, the injury they do will be comparatively slight.

Somewhat similar is the case of the careless. A man whose careless deed has led to a great calamity, is the very man above all others who will probably be careful henceforth, provided he realises that it was his carelessness which led to the evil. Restraint or punishment in his case is pedantic folly. He too, needs sympathy and help. And if anything else is needed, it is perhaps an investigation into, and alteration of, the circumstances which made his carelessness easy. Thus in these two classes beyond the attempt to set forth the right standard, and sympathetically to help the evil-doer, it is alteration in circumstances rather than any restraint of the wrong doer that is required.

But deeds arising from ill-will or perverted standard are in another category. That remedial treatment which might have something of the punitive* element in it, may sometimes be needed, was admitted when we discussed punishment. But this can only be justified if it can take place without really injuring the personal development of the evil-doer. Otherwise it defeats its own end. In general we may say of these two classes of wrong doing: (i.) That only by a moral

* Punitive in the sense of restraint and discipline, not in the sense of retribution.

change can they be wholly eliminated. That is we must go back behind the action to the false ideas from which it sprang, or to the ill-will that was its source. The cure is found in propagation of truth and good-will. (ii.) In many cases forcible restraint is worse for all parties than risking the possible acts of ill-will and wrong standard. Suppression of minorities, who might conceivably do harm, has not infrequently intensified the very evil that it was intended to prevent. (iii.) Disapproval of wrong acts may be strongly expressed, and, if sincere and widespread, is certain to do much towards the prevention of wrong doing. The individuals, who might do the wrong, may not share the general detestation of it. But the fact that it is genuinely detested is a restraining force even on the depraved.

We then conclude that, while we must take every means possible to prevent wrong acts, and therefore in a certain sense may be said to be intolerant of them, in only a minority of cases does this imply any restraint, or coercion of people, and that zeal in spreading truth, the exercise of good-will and the sympathetic help which we should extend towards wrong doers, are the most essential part of our work in preventing wrong acts. And these are in the spirit of toleration, not in that of intolerance.

And this is not unnatural, for the real battle is between ideas. Wrong actions spring

directly or indirectly, from wrong ideas, and they can only be finally prevented by right ideas. Our object must then be above all things the propagation of right ideas; and this can only take place in an atmosphere of toleration. We, therefore, advocate complete toleration. Not because ideas do not matter, nor because we are not strongly convinced of our own opinions. For neither is true. But because only by the widest toleration of ideas can truth be gained. We dread intolerance, for it may greatly hinder the search for truth. But we do not fear error, because we know the power of truth.

III. THE POWER OF TRUTH

Toleration is necessary that we may gain truth. But it is a negative principle. It is true that apart from toleration mankind will not gain truth. But neither will toleration alone secure truth. We may say that "Truth is strong and must prevail." But two questions arise. How will truth come to prevail? And why will truth prevail?

Napoleon is reported to have said cynically, "God is on the side of the big battalions." Is our conviction that truth will prevail based upon a Napoleonic idea of the sufficiency of force? Does truth prevail because the strongest party supports it? Is armed force to be its vindicator? Is might right? Is

the majority infallible? We know that the answer to all these questions is "No." Might has often been demonstrably in the wrong. Majorities often make mistakes. And if new truths had had to depend upon armed force for their support most of our most cherished religious and moral possessions would never have come to us. The Early Christians conquered the Roman Empire when possessed of no armed force, numerically a minority of the population, and having no advantages except those that arose from holding the truth and knowing that they held it.

Truth prevails because it is true and by no aid external to that. Truth wins by gaining the assent of genuine conviction. For truth is in the nature of things. Man's mind is made for truth. The world and man fit one another, for God is the one source of both. But appearances are often deceptive. Even in the material world we are often deceived by things looking other than they really are. The oar, which is really straight, looks bent in the water, for the medium, through which we look at it, distorts our vision. So, too, in moral and spiritual matters, actions and thoughts may often appear different from what they really are. What is taken by honest, but not very subtle thinkers, for prevarication, may really arise from the desire of an exceptionally acute and sensitive mind to be perfectly straight-forward in

difficult circumstances, as Newman's *Apologia* shows. And slowness in coming to a decision may arise from a fuller perception of the issues involved, as well as from irresolution or mental slackness. Conversely some men who are credited with great decision of character, are as a matter of fact, too stupid to see the further issues of their acts, and therefore easily reconcile themselves to courses of action that wiser men would hesitate to enter upon. Neither in matters of conduct nor in regard to material things can we take everything on its surface appearance.

But this neither means on the one hand that we are to be constantly in doubt, nor on the other that we are to distrust our own faculties, and take all our knowledge of the world, and our ideals of conduct on the authority of others. It means that the responsibility of careful investigation and critical analysis is laid upon us. A notion is very prevalent that truth is a sort of highest common factor of all opinions expressed. This may in part be due to our habit—a right habit as far as it goes—of acting upon the decision of the majority. But this is not done because the majority is necessarily right, but because, when a decision must be taken, it is obviously better, other things being equal, that it should be in accordance with the desires of the greater number rather than with that of the less. But truth has no

necessary relation to the opinions of the majority, nor is it to be found in a carefully adjusted compromise between conflicting views. Truth has often been substantially held by small minorities—as the instance of the Early Church shows. And compromise sometimes combines all the errors and none of the truths of both parties. It is only by careful investigation and by repeated criticism of facts and ideas that truth can be gained.

Not only then is it the duty of everyone firmly to stand for whatever truth he has already gained. That is good, but alone it is never sufficient. Everyone must also be continually a seeker after more truth. One should be ready always to correct one's views, ready to enlarge them, ready to subject them to the test of further experience and fresh facts. We need not only the boldness and conviction of the prophet, but the patience and humility of the scientific investigator, if we are fully to serve the cause of truth.

But such a painstaking and humble spirit in the advocates of spiritual truth will greatly increase their power of convincing other people, and this will be so in greater and greater degree the more educated and thoughtful people become. For while intensity of conviction alone may carry the unthinking along with it, it produces in them rather an emotional state resembling conviction than the true intellectual state of conviction. In fact in

this respect its power is very like that of oratory, which sways the masses to wild emotion, but causes little permanent alteration in their minds.

Again there are great psychological differences in the way in which people hold their convictions. Some people are naturally certain about everything. They appear to be constitutionally incapable of suspending judgment. Their convictions are always very strong and to chance acquaintances they may at first be very impressive. They must be definitely on one side or other in every conceivable question. But the fact that they cannot suspend judgment means that in nine cases out of ten their decisions rest upon inadequate grounds. If then they are asked to give a reason for the hope that is in them, they are unable to do so. Their conviction may produce by contagion an emotional semblance of conviction in other people, but it is scarcely capable of gaining a real intellectual assent. On the other hand there are people who habitually weigh every opinion with care. They never feel as certain about anything as those of the other class feel about everything. And their convictions are always subject to modification, should fresh light arise. Yet their convictions are really stronger and more capable of permanently impressing other people. This is because they are always adequately supported by

reason and fact, and therefore are intellectually communicable in a way that mere emotional convictions are not. In short the latter class are not only holders of truth, but seekers for truth, and are therefore more capable of helping in the advance of mankind towards truth.

Finally for the advance towards truth, beyond toleration which is the outward condition for the pursuit of truth, and the careful investigation which is intellectually necessary, there is need for a vital relation to the source of all truth. Without divine inspiration all our efforts are liable to fail. And divine inspiration does not only add to the emotional intensity of conviction, but it illuminates and enriches the mind, removing prejudices, and strengthening the patience without which we can neither extend toleration to those with whom we disagree, nor be successful in our search for truth ourselves. For divine inspiration is no substitute for mental activity, but a quickener and intensifier of it. The inspired man is neither the most dogmatically certain upon religious questions, nor the man who arrives at religious knowledge by some miraculous means apart from the exercise of his mental faculties, but the man who by communion with God, the source of all truth, has his whole personal life, mental as well as emotional, enriched and purified. Thus he feels more deeply, sees clearer, and

has a greater power of critical and constructive thinking, than the uninspired man of similar natural endowment. From this it follows that we cannot regard divine guidance and inspiration as irrelevant to our search for truth in any department of life. Whether our interests be scientific, commercial, social or political, communion with God and the illumination thereby received will enormously enhance our power of gaining and publishing truth, and of influencing our fellow men for good. And because it means personal contact with the source of all truth, and personal intercourse with the Father of all men, a real communion with God will increase in us tolerant zeal for truth, and comprehensive sympathy and love for our fellow men. By making right our relation to the centre of all being, it fits us into our niche in life and makes it possible for us to help others into theirs. For the whole of life is one, and we are members one of another. Truth then is no matter of the intellect merely, but of personal relations.

IX

SELF-SACRIFICE AND VOCATION

In the foregoing chapters the idea of self-development has often occurred. It has been assumed that self-development is a part of the Christian Aim. No doubt the question will be asked by some whether this is not a mistake. Is it not self-sacrifice rather than self-development which is the Christian Aim? Was it not in self-sacrifice that our Lord was especially our example? This is a subject upon which there is so much confusion of thought that a chapter must be devoted to it and to some kindred topics.

Throughout religious thought, not only in Christianity, but in many other religions, perhaps particularly in Hinduism, the idea has been extraordinarily prevalent that the virtue of any action is partly to be tested by its disagreeableness to the doer. This appears in Monasticism, in which the idea that the disagreeable is good, because it is disagreeable, obtained a strong hold. It tends to work out thus: "Choose the hard, disagreeable, unpleasant tasks; take the work, not for which you have a natural aptitude, but for which you have a repulsion, then you will be virtuous." Up to a point this is good. There

are hard and disagreeable tasks, which have to be done, and someone must do them. There is then real value to society, if some people willingly and cheerfully undertake them. But even so, people are so differently constituted that what is hard and disagreeable to one is quite pleasant work for another. It is therefore probable that deliberately to choose such tasks, merely because they are distasteful, is unnecessarily to increase the sum of human misery.

Carried one step further, as indeed it was carried in Monasticism, this self-sacrificing tendency becomes Asceticism, which regards the body as radically bad, or at any rate as the seat of a radical evil. In consequence Asceticism teaches that the body is to be neglected, and even suppressed or injured in order that the spirit may come to its own. In this type of thought the holy man is not the man of wide sympathies and deep love to his fellowmen, but the austere self-torturer, the Indian Fakir, the hair-shirted monk. However right self-sacrifice may be any reasonable person must feel that there is something wrong with thought of this kind. Especially the Christian must be disturbed when he begins to think about it ; because the life of his Master was clearly not conducted on those lines. He ate and drank and mixed with men in an ordinary manner, and His doing so offended some of the good people of

His day. Furthermore, if we examine the results of this attitude to life, we find at least three of them are definitely bad.

(i.) First it sets up a negative standard of morality. Character is judged not so much for what it is as for what it is not. The good man is the man who refrains from some ordinary and healthy practice of the common people. He will not marry; will not mix in society; observes strange restrictions about his food; wears uncomfortable clothes; acts in a way to ruin his health; deliberately maltreats his body. From this follows the idea that goodness is opposed to natural happiness.

(ii.) Second it sets up the standard of Unfittingness. If everyone acted upon the principle that to do unpleasant work was virtuous, merely because it was unpleasant, we should all end by doing what each one was ideally unfitted for. But one can never do uncongenial work as well as one does what one is really fitted for. So the consequence would be that all the work of the world would be badly done, and that the world would be a vastly more uncomfortable place than it need be. Moreover, the effect of uncongenial work is generally adverse upon people's tempers. So we should have increasing unpleasantness all around as the result. None of these results promise well for the realisation of the Christian Aim.

(iii.) But worse still the third result is a

wrong idea of God. One who really holds this ascetic idea believes that God is a hard taskmaster, who shows His pleasure in His servants by treating them badly, and finds an added delight in those who torture themselves, and prevent the natural development of their personalities by denying themselves the ordinary pleasures and satisfactions of life. Thus God is thought of as cruel, and goodness as distasteful. Natural evil is thought of as moral good, and in consequence many natural good and beautiful things fall under suspicion of being evil.

If this type of thought were ever carried out to its logical conclusion, it would lead to suicide. But if that is its conclusion it must be false at bottom. There is something wrong with the general idea of self-sacrifice. We have accepted superficial ideas. We must dig down to foundation principles.

If we wish to gain the right idea of what is pleasing to God, we must start with the right idea of God. If we can grasp the idea of God that Jesus gave to us, we shall have the key to unlock all problems. There can be no doubt that the words "God is Love" convey as nearly as words can the conception of God which Jesus imparted to His disciples. If God is love, it is impossible to suppose that He can wish anything incompatible with the completest well-being of His creatures. This includes both their most perfect happiness

and their fullest possible development. Thus it is true that a part of the aim of everyone ought to be self-development. But the development must be a development of his spiritual, real self ; not of his distorted, selfish self ; the mean man must be developed, but not by the development of his meanness ; the cruel man must be developed, but not by the growth of his cruelty. In short the sinner must be developed, but that development can only come, not as his sin increases, but as he gets rid of it. Now, because sin is fundamentally selfishness, the first essential of true development is unselfishness and love. Only as one comes into contact with others, and devotes one's self to them, can true development take place. Self-development, that is incompatible with the development of others, is not development of self, but development of selfishness, which means stunting of self. We are members one of another ; and therefore true self-development only comes through the development of all. This may, and often does, require what we generally call self-sacrifice to some individuals. But the idea that there is any good in self-sacrifice in itself is not true. To neglect the body and only attend to the contemplative life is not true self-development. We are whole men, body, soul and spirit. And if we are to learn what God means us to learn in this world, we must endeavour to develop

ourselves on every side of our being. It is not a narrowing of our interests into a concentration upon one part of ourselves that is needed. It is an expansion of interest to cover other people. The Ascetic narrowed his life, till he thought only of what he called "spiritual things." Christ's wide sympathies embraced all life and all humanity.

Behind this false asceticism lies a piece of intellectual confusion. When people first awake to the fact that life is more than the body and its wants, they find the spiritual hard to define. It is clearly not material and physical, and it tends to be defined as the negative of these. Thus it naturally seems that the first step in the cultivation of the spiritual will be neglect of the material. And there is a certain truth in this, as our Lord's words, "be not anxious what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed," show. But if these words are interpreted to mean that the material basis of life does not matter; and if everyone were to act as if that were true, life in this world would cease. And if any people take them in that sense, they become dependent upon others for their livelihood, and far from helping towards the Christian Ideal of harmonious co-operation, become obstacles in the way of it.

The whole difficulty arises from a negative definition. The spiritual is not the physical,

but it is not therefore its opposite. The real spiritual is love. It is that intimate relationship with other personalities which is the aim of creation. The highest happiness can only come in intercourse with other people. So the happiness of the individual, his development, and the development and harmony of society, are all found in the same way, the way of growing perfection of intercourse with others. When all obstacles of sin and stupidity have been cleared away from men's hearts and minds, this aim, the communion of saints, will have been attained. But it is far from being attained yet. The communion is marred and broken. The whole duty of every man is to work for the establishment of that communion. This means an entire dedication to God. And that is the true self-sacrifice. In fact by derivation, and in original meaning, sacrifice means "what makes sacred," "what is dedicated." The use of it in the sense of what involves great, and regrettable cost, or what is disagreeable, is secondary, and is no necessary part of the meaning at all. But the true sacrifice, which is dedication to the will of God, of necessity is dedication to the achievement of the Christian Aim, the perfect development of the whole of mankind in harmonious co-operation. And this includes and necessitates self-development.

The true self-sacrifice works out in self-

development in three ways. For dedication implies three forms of progress, every one of which is probably infinite.

(i.) Progress in more thoroughly understanding what the aim is. The more anyone gives himself to the will of God, the more he finds out what that will means for him in his own life. He may at some definite time surrender himself to God's service. But he will constantly find out that that service has a meaning for him in lines he had not been before aware of. He will find that in one portion of his life after another the idea of the service of God may become more dominating. And as his knowledge of life and natural powers expand, he will continually present these added powers in life as a sacrifice to God.

(ii.) There is progress too in grasping the means by which advance towards the aim is to be made. This is an expanding power of seeing the possibilities of life. Not only when one sees possibilities should one at once use them for the advance of the aim, one's ability to see possibilities ought continually to increase.

(iii.) There is progress in spiritual development. This is a progress towards more perfect communion with God and man, and more perfect *ability* to co-operate for the good of all. It is essentially an increase in the genius for friendship.

Every one of these forms of progress appears to be infinite. As one is constantly becoming aware of new situations, new abilities in one's self and new relationships with other people, so the possibility of progress is always new. And as every one of these is grasped, another opens out before one. It is not that one never reaches what one aimed at. The true Christian life is a life of continually being satisfied, and continually reaching out to further satisfactions. When one has missed one's way in life one may say in disappointment :

" Man never is, but always to be blest."

But as one finds one's way, guided by the Light of Christ, towards the Christian Ideal, one would rather express it :

" Man always is, yet always to be blest."

Man in search of the false satisfactions of life has been compared to the donkey which is induced to move forward by the sight of a carrot dangled in front of its nose. It goes on to get the carrot, but as it advances, the carrot advances too, and it never gets it. This may be a true picture of the pursuit of selfish aims. But it is not a picture of the Christian life. For as a man dedicates himself to God, he is constantly led on by the hope of attainment ahead ; and yet is constantly attaining. He goes not in vain hope of a

good that continually eludes him, but in the enjoyment of a good, of which he is continually partaking, and which nourishes his spiritual life ; so that he is not only led on to further good but given increasing energy to attain it. But stationary perfection will never be reached. It cannot be. For stationary perfection would be death.

What then do we mean by perfection ? The true idea of Perfection is perfection of advance. One gives one's self to the Christian Aim, not simply as a whole, but in detail. And as one becomes conscious of new things in life, one must dedicate those too to God. Every day brings unexpected opportunities. As soon as found they must be used for the advance of the Christian Aim. It is futile as well as next door to impossible for any one to say, " I have attained." For new demands are even now being made upon him, and unless he is at every moment doing just the right work, thinking just the right thought, saying just the right word, he is even then failing of attainment. Thus true perfection consists in continually being adequate for the demands of a constantly new situation. A state of perfection would then not be a motionless state ; but a state in which every new possibility was at once seen and at once acted on for the good of the whole community. It would require on the part of people not simply a perfect will to do what they believed

to be right as soon as they saw it, but also a perfect conception of right, and a perfect perception of the needs of new circumstances as they arose. Thus in a perfect state there would be no, even temporary, dislocations, and no roughness. And this would be not because all was perfectly restful and uneventful, but because spiritually, morally and intellectually everyone was extraordinarily wide awake and active. There would be a constant putting forth of effort, but always along the right line, for the right purpose and at the right time; and in consequence effort would always succeed. Struggle, if such it be properly called, would always be pleasant, because never baulked, and never leading to failure. Such a state then would be one of perfect joy, but in no sense a state of inactivity. Its joy would be joy both in action and in contemplation; and above all it would be joy in personal intercourse.

And because each person was doing exactly the right thing, at the right time, each would be developed to the full extent of his possibilities. And all this would follow precisely because every one was perfectly dedicated to the will of God.

It is in fact the opposition against the good, and only that, which makes self-realisation entail what we generally call self-sacrifice. Jesus, the writer to the Hebrews tells us, had to bear the *contradiction of sinners against*

themselves,* and that is the only source of self-sacrifice in the life of His followers. The real Christian is not aiming at self-sacrifice ; he is aiming to bring the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. He is doing his best to advance the common interests of mankind. And then his path is made hard, he has to go through sorrow, suffering, and possibly death, not because he has chosen that ; not because such is good in itself ; not because God desires to bring suffering upon His children ; but simply and solely because some people have done wrong, and are consciously or unconsciously fighting against their own best interests in fighting against God. That is the meaning of the Cross of Christ.† He did not suffer because God delights to see His children suffer. It was God that suffered. And He suffered because man was working against his own best interests.

The whole object of the life of everyone ought to be self-sacrifice in the sense of self-dedication to God. Only so can the Kingdom of God be established. *For self-dedication of all men to God is the Kingdom of God.* But for anyone to *desire* self-sacrifice, in the common usage of the term, is a sign of either morbidity or sentimentality. Nevertheless

* Hebrews xii. 3, reading " themselves " with the R.V. and the best MSS.

† For a discussion of why the death of Christ was necessary see the writer's *Atonement and Non-resistance.*

his self-dedication to God may require it. For the contradiction of sinners against themselves brings a similar testing to the Christian that it brought to Christ.

The test of the Christian life and character is not self-sacrifice, in the sense of self-injury, suffering and sorrow ; it is self-sacrifice in the sense of dedication to the will of God. And dedication implies vocation. There are certain attitudes and actions in life which can never be right, and their opposites that are always good. Selfishness, hatred, oppression, injury of others, insincerity, falsehood and cruelty are always opposed to the Christian Aim, and cannot under any circumstances be right. On the other hand love, kindness, care for others, unselfishness, fidelity, truthfulness and self-control are necessary in those who work for the Christian Aim, and are never out of place. But the Christian life, the life that really achieves something in approach to the Christian Ideal, does not only forsake the one series and practice the other. It is not only good in general which we must do ; but within the circle of good in general there is a particular good to which we are called. Not that each of us is to be satisfied with specialising in one Christian virtue. No man is doing right who is truthful but not loving, or self-controlled but not unselfish. Within the sphere of all the virtues, and of each separate virtue, there

is a special piece of work to which each of us is called. It is the work which needs us, and may be undone or badly done without us. Beyond the first necessity for fulfilling the Christian Aim, that our general attitude to God and our fellowmen be right, there is a second necessity, that each of us under Divine Guidance, find, and do, the particular work to which he individually is called.

We believe that God is almighty.* Whatever else this may mean or not mean, it must imply that He can have individual relations with each one of His children. The fact of their incalculable number, would, if He were not almighty, make us doubt the possibility of this. For the great men of the world being limited, and attending to great things, cannot give attention to small details and to individuals. But that is because, in spite of their comparative greatness, they are yet only little, like the rest of us. We therefore must believe that God has a thoughtful, considerate care for each one of us; an understanding of our physical, mental and spiritual constitution; a knowledge of the facts and experiences of our past, and of the possibilities of our future. He sees exactly how we can fit into the present circumstances of the world, so as to do the very best that is possible for us towards bringing all nearer to the Christian Aim, and at the same time to develop our

* See Appendix, "The Divine Omnipotence."

own lives to the utmost. And at every stage of the world's development and of that of each of us, the same is true. God has a place for each. And this is true even when by our sin and folly we have unfitted ourselves to do the work that might have originally been ours. That vocation may no longer be possible to us, but God has still work for us to do, a niche for us to fill in His world. And by listening to and obeying His voice even one who has thrown away his chances and harmed his fellow men may become a worker together with God towards the regeneration of the world.

Next, therefore, to the general attitude of love to God and man, the most important thing for everyone is to find out and do the work to which God has called him. There appear to be four chief tests of vocation :—

(i.) One's vocation must be work directed towards the achievement of the Christian Aim.

(ii.) It is probably work for which one's bodily, mental and spiritual constitution and previous experiences of life have fitted one.

(iii.) It is work which fits into and helps forward the vocation of others.

(iv.) It is work for which one has a special feeling of call.

The only one of these four tests which manifestly applies always and everywhere is the first. No one can be called of God to work that is opposing the Christian Aim, or

if such be possible, to work that is irrelevant to it. The fourth test would apply always if everyone was earnestly seeking to be guided. But seeing that many do not think about guidance at all who yet appear to be doing good and true work for the benefit of mankind, we must assume that some are guided without knowing it. They are unconsciously servants of God. Nevertheless it is always a valid test for vocation to those who seek the guidance of God. They will not be without it. The second and third tests are of great general practical utility, but they cannot be regarded as absolute. Men, who everyone supposed were unfitted for certain tasks, and who themselves were sure they could not do them, have under a strong sense of guidance done them to their own and other people's amazement. And until all hear the voice of God perfectly and respond to it completely, there may arise the need to do work which is incompatible with the *apparent* vocation of others. Real vocations can never clash. But our grasp of what God has called us to may be so imperfect as to clash with another's imperfect grasp of his vocation. But probably such cases are exceptional. As a general rule the tests hold.

We shall gain most insight into the meaning of vocation by discussing the practical application of these tests.

(i.) All work which promotes general

development and harmonious co-operation may be a vocation. Under a mistaken conception of spiritual affairs, it has been supposed that vocation must be strictly limited to what has been called Religious Matters. Thus the idea is very prevalent that the call of God may make a man a minister, preacher, missionary, or perhaps even a teacher, doctor or philanthropist ; but that such occupations as manufacturer, merchant and farmer are secular, in some way apart from religion, and neither require, nor can be the objects of, vocation. But in so far as the production of food, and the manufacture of clothing and utensils are necessary for life, these occupations are essential to the realisation of the Christian Ideal. That ideal is not to be realised apart from material things, nor in spite of them ; but through material things, by making them the vehicle of love, brotherhood and co-operation. It is therefore as necessary that the right man be in the right place in business and agricultural life, as in the pulpit or school.

Moreover, the absence of the thought that in these materially productive employments one is doing good to one's fellow men has made it possible for the false ideas of commerce to gain currency. The commonly accepted ideas that commerce is essentially a fight, and that its chief feature is competition, spring from the fact that the idea of service of one's

fellow men has almost departed from it. Commerce is essentially not a fight, but a co-operation for the common good. It has only become a fight through the introduction into it of false ideas and mistaken aims. Competition ought not to be its chief feature, but to be entirely absent from it.* And the only real value of production at all, is to produce what is wanted because it is wanted, and to produce the amount of it that is wanted. If the farmer or business man made it his aim to produce for the common good in co-operation with others, he could feel that his work was work for the Kingdom of God, and in consequence might feel as much a call to it as a true missionary does to convert the heathen.

Again, if all work for the common good were recognised as an object of Divine Vocation all distinctions between honourable and dishonourable employment, respectable and non-respectable occupations would go. Or rather, every form of work for the common good would be honourable and respectable, and only what was against the common welfare would be regarded as dishonourable and disreputable. The tyrant, oppressor, sweater, and the maker of harmful luxuries would alone be dishonoured; all honest workers for the general good, whether with hand or brain, would be had in equal honour; and all could

* See *Foundations of Peace*, Chapters V., VIII., and IX.

feel that in their everyday work they served God and their fellow men.

(ii.) And this naturally brings us to the second test. As all work ought to be work for God and one's fellows, it would follow that generally speaking each should do the work for which he was best fitted. What stands in the way of that at present is that some pieces of work are regarded as more honourable and are better paid than others. But why should not all work, both be regarded as equally honourable and be paid equally? Why should not every man give his best work to the community in doing the work that his natural abilities and training fit him for, under the sense that God has called him to do it? And why should not the community generally see to it that everyone of its members has what he needs in life? If the Christian Aim were already attained this would certainly be so. But how can the Christian Aim be attained unless the spirit of vocation and service enters our ordinary work? Only so can the world be made the Kingdom of God.

Each, therefore, ought generally speaking to be doing the work for which his natural endowments, training and experience fit him. It is irrational to suppose that the weak-bodied are meant to do hard bodily work, or that the dull in mind are meant to be scholars. We can only serve God rightly by giving Him our best. Therefore that side of us that is best

developed will be the one that is most used in our vocation. The man of alert and quick mind ought to have the chance of having it trained, and use it for the service of God and his fellows. The man with a strong, vigorous body ought to use that to do some of the necessary hard work of the world. This means that those who take vocation seriously both in finding their aim and in helping others to gain theirs, will often run counter to the ideas of present-day society. They will make for an obliteration of class distinctions. For the servants of God are only of one class, workers for the Kingdom of God. And in that class there is no high or low that we are capable of judging.

(iii.) Because the Christian Aim is harmonious co-operation, one of the tests of vocation must be, does the work help forward and fit into the vocations of others? This test, like the last, cannot be made the primary test, but it is an important secondary test. And it may often work towards the modification of a vocation already accepted. The total aim of all is the Kingdom of God. Each has a piece of work to do for that. But alone no one's piece of work is his whole aim, because it is not the whole of the Christian Aim. Therefore, his business is not only to do his work, but to take the right methods, the right opportunities, and have a care for others in the way he does it. If in one's anxiety to

follow out one's vocation one injures other people, rides rough shod over their desires, or can spare no time to help and comfort those in need, one is not forwarding the real Christian Aim. For one is disregarding personal values, and not observing the fundamental requirement of Christianity—love. This means that readiness to be interrupted, and even for a time to put aside an important work, in order to help others and attend to the claims of love, is necessary to the true vocation. Over and above his special vocation, or perhaps one ought to say rather, as a necessary part of that vocation, every Christian ought to have

> "A heart at leisure from itself
> To soothe and sympathise."

And this test of vocation applies in another way. For all who are not yet sure of their call it may give a new sense of values. After all the Christian Aim is only finally expressible in personal terms, "a harmonious community," "helping one another," "a society knit together by love." When we recognise this it will become clear to some that their work is nothing that appears great to outside view at all, but is simply easing the path of others, helping to bear the burden of those who would be otherwise overloaded. For example there is no more important work in the world than that of mother of a family. But many a mother is oppressed with the cares and

burdens of her life, and loses energy and elasticity, and in consequence cannot do as much for her children as they need. This must always have been so amongst the poor. As a result poor women are often old before their time. Owing to the difficulties of getting domestic help, and the general inefficiency of such help when obtained, the same state of things often prevails in other classes of society as well. May it not really be that it is the vocation of many a girl to be a help to such mothers? The work is looked down on, but it is vastly more useful and more directly servicable to the Christian Aim than are the clerking jobs now so much sought after. Also it is an excellent preparation for being a wife and mother. In the ideal state of society every mother, at all events during the hardest years of her life, would have such a helper and companion, simply because she needs it. The benefit to all parties concerned would be enormous. The mother would keep energy and remain strong and fresh. The children would have a better home education, the most important part of education, and the helper would gain an experience which would be of value in after life. May it not be a piece of work towards bringing in the Kingdom of God for many a girl now even when such work is despised, to take it as her vocation, and so to do it that it cannot continue to be despised?

This is one example. There are many other pieces of work which seem indefinite, and which we do not estimate very highly, which are yet of very great importance because they are making life easier for those whose lot is hard, and thus directly make for the Christian Aim. If our standard of values were really Christian, we should honour them. They are pre-eminently service.

(iv.) Beyond all these other tests of vocation there is the supreme test of the consciousness of call. Anyone who in dependence upon God seeks to find his vocation will sooner or later hear the Divine voice saying : "This is the way, walk thou in it." But this does not mean that up till that time he will be justified in idling away his time, or in doing half-heartedly such work as comes to him. No one who does not try to do the work before him well, even when it is distasteful, is likely to find his vocation. When one's work is uncongenial, one may be justified in seeking something else, but one is not justified in neglecting it or doing it badly. It is he that is faithful in a few things who is set over many things. And he who does his best in the work in which circumstances place him, is he who is most likely soon to find his real work and the Divine Vocation. And to those who want to find their vocation and have not yet found it, the tests already suggested will be of use ; but above all they

should do three things. Work well at whatever they are engaged upon. Pray well, that they may have God's guidance. And keep their eyes open and mind alert to catch the opportunity as it comes. He who does this is not likely long to be without guidance towards his life work. Our dedication to God requires this. How can we expect Him to call us to a particular piece of work until we have shown a desire to be His servants? Indeed, until the special piece of work to which we feel a call comes, our vocation is to do with all our might the work before us.

Our conclusions then are that the ordinary use of the term self-sacrifice is false and misleading, but that it has a real and most important meaning for everyone. Self-sacrifice truly means dedication to the will of God; and that is the whole duty of everyone. This self-dedication implies self-development, because the aim of God in the world is the harmonious development of *all* His children. And each can only do effective work for that as he becomes the best in every possible way. But to aim at self-development cannot achieve the aim, for that leads to selfishness. The great Christian Aim means self-forgetfulness. But as one aims at the good of all one gains the development of self which one did not seek.

The painful element in dedication, the

self-sacrifice in the ordinary sense of the word, arises only from the contradiction of sinners against themselves. (We must remember that part of this is within ourselves.) But dedication itself is wholly joyful. It is the way of infinite, continually satisfying progress, and the path of perfection. In fact it *is* the Kingdom of God. And this dedication implies for each a personal, intimate relation to God, a vocation. Pain and suffering may come through following the vocation, but they are no test of its genuineness. Far more suffering may come from going counter to it. The only tests are aim, fitness and call. We must work with all our might for the one aim, we must take that work for which we are fitted and which fits into the work of others, and we must hear the Divine Call and obey it. That is the true self-sacrifice, and it is essentially joyful. It may bring comfort and a peaceful and pleasant life. It may mean hardship, sorrow and suffering. But neither is comfort anything, nor hardship ; but doing the will of God. To do His will is our vocation, and in His will is our peace. And that is the one true Sacrifice.

X

REDEMPTION*

We have approached our study of the Christian Ideal from the point of view of duty and responsibility. We have endeavoured to answer the question "What demands does the Ideal make upon us?" And each chapter has been an attempt to give a partial answer to that question. The answers all combine together into one great comprehensive answer, that the business of the Church of Christ, and of each individual Christian, is to work for the coming of the Kingdom of God by the same methods that Jesus used. These are: Perfect dedication to the will of God, shown in accepting life as a divine vocation and seeking for guidance in every detail of it; a wide tolerance of other people, founded upon an enlightened zeal for truth; an intense desire to serve men in every way possible; an absence of all censoriousness; and the determination to overcome evil with good and good only.

* This chapter does not pretend to be a full and adequate treatment of this immense subject. It is a consideration of it as related to the moral and social outlook of this book.

This method of life is difficult, but its difficulties do not lie in the fact that it is contrary to nature. For it is not. It is God's way, therefore in the highest degree natural. Rather it is contrary to human bad habit which has become a second nature to all of us. It is the way that fits into the order of nature. It will be seen to be without a trace of paradox, when once we see things as they really are. Its difficulty to us simply arises from human sin; first from the fact that we have throughout our lives been more or less accustomed to methods of re-action to environment contrary to this method; and secondly from the fact that the world generally because it is "separated from the Divine Harmony," is energetically opposing its own best interests, and in a passion of supposed self-preservation is hurrying to destruction.

We are then engaged in a fight. Against us are allied all the world forces of delusion and selfishness, and they have within us, as allies, traitorous ideas and instincts, bred from long habitual acceptance of perverted standards, which by opening the gates to the enemy, may cause us to lose the battle. But on our side, allied with our real self, are the real nature of things, and God Himself, who through us and in us is working out the World's Redemption. For that and nothing less is our Aim.

But this claim of the Christian Ideal upon us is not only a task set us by God. It is God's own task, in performing which He is giving Himself unstintingly to us. Redemption, from its very nature needs human co-operation, yet it is essentially God's act. It requires our co-operation because it is the expulsion of selfishness and the establishment of the reign of love. And Love can only reign in us as we love. This is why our Lord said, "The Kingdom of God is within you." Its very nature is inward, because it is love. But redemption is God's act, because He is the source of Love, and only as we receive His love, can we ourselves love and so be redeemed. Again, Redemption, because it is the reign of love, cannot be enjoyed alone. The individual is saved to serve, and unless service, prompted by love, is his life, there is no proof of the reality of his salvation. And so the salvation of every individual, while an end in itself, is yet just as truly viewed as a step towards the final consummation, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of God and Christ. We must then consider the work of Redemption in three stages :—

(i.) God's beginning, seen especially in Christ.

(ii.) Our experience of God working through us, and our working together with Him.

(iii.) The Consummation, which is still future, when the world will be redeemed into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

We shall discuss the first subject in this chapter, leaving the two latter to the next.

GOD'S BEGINNING

The world is in revolt from God its true ruler. How this revolt began is no part of our present concern. The fact is there. There is no need of Christian dogma to prove the general sin of mankind. It is obvious. The question that concerns us is, how is the revolt to be ended ? Is God to be effectively and truly King of Mankind, or no ? And if He is, by what means is He going to gain His Kingdom ? No one who believes in God at all can believe that He will be permanently defeated. His Kingdom must come. This has been the faith of all the saints of every age and every religion. It was the faith of the Prophets of Israel, of the Early Church, and of Christ Himself. It has been often assumed that, when the right time had come, God would intervene in omnipotence, destroy the evil, confirm the good, miraculously transform the world and reign. But there are three great reasons for believing that this form of the hope is mistaken, that such is not God's way. The first is that if it had been possible

for Him to set the world right by the use of coercive power, it remains inconceivable why He should ever have let it revolt. If the world could have been put right by the direct omnipotence of force, then it could have been kept from going wrong by that means, and the God who let it go wrong would be either not almighty or not good.*

The second reason is that down within us we all of us feel that a putting right, or keeping right, by coercion is unsatisfactory. At best the order and harmony so produced would be the order and harmony of machinery, not that of living beings. But if the freedom of choice, which we all *feel*, be not a delusion, then the divine rule must be something consistent with it, not destructive of it. And again if Human Freedom be really necessary to the achievement of the Divine Ideal, then it is something that God either cannot, or will not over-ride. And if this is so, then the revolt of mankind from God's rule is partly explained. It is due to wrong choice—to a succession of wrong choices.

The third reason for supposing that God is not going to introduce His Kingdom by coercion is that Jesus Christ in His life, teaching and death, shows us God using an utterly different, and opposite way. He wins man by love and moral appeal, and by no other means. To assume then that God will

* See Appendix, *The Divine Omnipotence.*

in the future use coercion, instead of moral appeal, would mean either that God is changeable, sometimes using one method, and sometimes one at variance with it; or that He will sometime get tired of the appeal of love and persuasion, and fall back upon the ultimate means of coercion. Either of these alternatives would imply that Jesus Christ does not fully reveal Him.

We then assume that God's action in winning the kingdom of mankind is what has been shown to us in Jesus Christ; that He takes a method that does not destroy, but establishes human freedom, and above all that, by this method, He provides the means by which the character of Humanity, and of every individual man, can grow to perfection. He requires of men willing service, because only by willing service can the true character be formed, and willing service cannot be forced.

Man, constituted as he is, with power to grasp ideals, form purposes and work towards them, could oppose himself to Divine coercion, could say in effect, "I will not do His will. He may destroy me, and so triumph in His might over my weakness; but I will oppose Him." This is the very essence of tragic heroism, and even though we believe it sinful we cannot hide from ourselves that it contains something noble. If God's will were merely arbitrary, if He were like an Oriental despot,

and His aim was His own selfish glory, great-souled men might thus oppose Him, and we could not withold from them a certain admiration. But the feeble and emasculated would obey Him at once ; and would not many men despise them for it ? It is in fact the delusion that something like this is the actual state of affairs, which has been the cause of the revolt against Christianity of some heroic souls. It had seemed to them a despicable cringing before an Almighty Despot. The aim of Christianity has been rightly stated as the glory of God ; but that glory has too often been pictured as selfish and arbitrary. It has been supposed that right and wrong were decided by the arbitrary fiat of God. That to those who did the arbitrary right there was given, again arbitrarily, the reward of eternal blessedness. And to those who refused God's arbitrary demands, there was, as arbitrarily, a sentence of eternal torment. If this were so there would be every reason why the self-seeking far-sighted hedonist, and the coward, should endeavour to do God's will, but none why the independent, courageous and adventurous should do so.

But this idea of God's will and His glory receives no support from Jesus Christ. It is an importation into Christianity from the fear-dominated animism of the pagan world. The fact is that the message of Jesus Christ was so far beyond anything that the heathen

would have dared to conceive,* that to vast numbers of men it was too good to be true. They instinctively toned the message down, mixing the unlimited love of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with the capriciousness and malice of their heathen deities. But in Jesus " we see the Fatherhood and truth of God revealed " ; and it is good without limit. The glory of God is indeed the aim of mankind. But that glory is no selfish thing. It is nothing else than the completest possible good of all. For the message of Jesus is that God is the Father of all, not in a vague, general, abstract way, but in a concrete, individual, personal way. That He really cares for each of us, not as one in a crowd, as a part of humanity, but as a living person, whom He loves as an individual. And that this individual care is not for the favoured few, but for everyone. In short, that God cares for all men by caring for each one.

But this means that the interests of men cannot clash ; that all belong together in one common sonship to their Father and God, and that the happiness of each is in the welfare of all. The Fatherhood of God means the Brotherhood of man. If we believed Jesus we should take this, not as a noble sentiment, to be put in practice sometime in the vague future, but as an indisputable fact,

* The same was true even of the Jews, as their rejection of Jesus Christ proves.

which lies at the basis of all human relationships.

And so the right is no arbitrary demand of a despot, but simply the line of conduct by which alone the good of all can be attained; a good which is at the same time the completest possible good of each one. The man who takes that way naturally and inevitably reaches life and blessedness. He who takes the opposite way goes towards destruction. And in a world constituted for the development of human personality it could not be otherwise. Because the world is meant for society, and because we are members of one another, everyone of us either helps the whole community to advance towards that perfect happiness which can only be found in harmonious co-operation; or delays that advance, causing strife and misery. And a part of the general effect upon society is the effect of each one on the particular individuals with whom he has to do. He helps them forward or throws them back. In the extreme case each of us may either save or ruin other lives. And in all this there is nothing arbitrary. Men are made for Society; their true life only can be found in God and in one another. Heaven is union with God and man. Hell is strife and discord. And the way to Heaven is the way of love and service for others. It is so simply because man is made for society. And therefore the way of love and service

is also the way of self-development and happiness.

And now we can see why the way of coercion is not God's way, strong though it seems ; and why His way is the way of love, which looks weak, yet is omnipotent. To stand out for ever against the coercion of arbitrary omnipotence might be foolish, but it would also be heroic. To stand out for ever against the persuasion of truth and love would be nothing but undiluted folly—a folly so groundless as to be in the end impossible. For delusion is its only basis, and that cannot last for ever.

And so the revelation of God in Christ, which is at the same time His act of Redemption, consists in an unwearied insistence on the Identity of Interest between Himself and man, and between man and man. An insistence expressed in every possible way both by deed and word. The teaching of Jesus, His works of mercy and the spirit of humility and service which characterised all He said or did, alike display His insistence upon identity of interest. But men through long misunderstanding and blindness failed to see that in Him God spoke to them. Passion, prejudice, and perverted standards led them to oppose one who only meant them well.

Had Jesus come to save the Jewish nation alone, He would have been hailed as the

heaven-sent Messiah; zealots and fanatics would have flocked to His standard; blood would have flowed; deeds of horror would have been done in His name, and a Jewish Empire might have been set up—an empire in which the supposed interests of Jews would have been protected, and the interests of all other men disregarded—a sectional, tyrannous, small-souled, blustering empire, thinking itself great and wonderful—just like any other empire—and like all other empires a menace and disaster to mankind, a cancer in the body of humanity. But because God so loved *the world*, Jesus came in no supposed sectional interest, but in the interests of all men, to save all. And because His own nation, who had for all that reached the highest moral level of any nation in the ancient world, were so poor, mean-spirited and narrow-souled, they rejected Him. They were short-sighted and selfish, because they suffered under the delusion of clash of interests.

The interest of Jesus was the salvation of all men. He could not save Himself from them, without denying the message He came to bring. And so He died. Not because God needed to be placated, as a paganism inside the Christian Church has taught, but because men would not accept His message. To the blind selfishness of Jewish Nationalism He seemed a traitor and impostor. And by an unholy alliance with the Roman Power,

which they hated, the Jewish leaders had Him crucified as the Patriot leader, which they did not believe Him to be. *He was crucified because His message was too generous for the narrow hearts of His people.* Deliberate deception, serving the delusion of clash of interests, caused His death. And thus dramatically He, who stood for truth and the unity of all mankind, was slain by falsehood and the supposed interests of class and nation. And because these powers of evil found Him still abiding by His message, His death is crown and consummation of His life. It proves by the last and most severe test the strength of conviction, with which He held the truth, and the unswerving determination with which He loved to the end.

Thus it was in Him that God demonstrated to the hard hearts of men His unlimited love. Thus He insisted upon the identity of interest between man and Himself. And by that demonstration God is winning back the world to Himself. Throughout the centuries since the Crucifixion, it is above all the death of Christ which has appealed to men, and brought them to repentance and salvation. In it they have *felt* the Love of God. And though that love has often been obscured to men's intellect by the theories of Atonement, which have from time to time been current, most of which horribly misrepresent the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, this has not

been able to prevent it healing and renewing many hearts and lives.*

But the mists and obscurities are now passing away. The old false notions of appeasing an angry God, and paying a debt to a creditor God, are becoming incredible, and must be relegated to the Theological Museum. And as they disappear the truth of a God of love, winning men by love and for love, will be seen in all its convincing power. And when that is seen it cannot be resisted. Man can only oppose a God, who is working for his true interests, while he suffers under the delusion that God is opposing him. But where he sees God sacrifice Himself for man, God give Himself without stint, and without any necessity, but the inward compulsion of love for man, who rebelled and "deserved only punishment," then there comes a time when he cannot any longer refuse God's call, and when he is bound to turn to God in repentance and love.

For the way of love is God's way of omnipotence. The love of God is so great, so patient and so strong, that in the end it must overcome all obstacles. And this omnipotence does not over-ride, or crush the human will. It does not break human freedom. It confirms it. Man, won by love

* For the theory of the Atonement underlying this chapter, the reader is referred to *Reconciliation and Reality* by W. F. Halliday in this Series; and to the writer's *Atonement and Non-resistance* (Swarthmore Press, Ltd.).

obeys God, and obeys Him because he can do no other. But he can do no other, not because coercion has been exercised upon him, but because from the very depths of his being there rises an assent to the will of God. His heart, his mind and his will all agree that God's way is the right way. He takes it because he wants to take it.

And this means that while an omnipotence of coercion, if such a thing were possible in a world of persons, could only succeed by breaking down freedom and destroying personality; the omnipotence of love, the Divine Almightiness, not only leaves man free, but confirms and strengthens his freedom, builds up his personality and establishes his character. For it works *only* by revelation of truth, goodness and beauty. Man accepts the will of God, not for what may happen if he does not, but because it appeals to him as the true satisfaction of all his needs. When the will of one is imposed upon another, there is a restriction of personal freedom, a reduction of spiritual forces. When two come to see that their interests are identical, there is a release of spiritual forces, and an overflowing of affection. The latter way is God's way with man. Thus it is that the man who experiences salvation in Jesus Christ, is more of a man than he was before. His soul, his mind and his character grow. And especially does he develop in love to all. The

service of God is indeed perfect freedom, because it satisfies all human needs, and develops all human faculties by uniting man to God and to man in the bonds of love. And Redemption is nothing else than God's love bringing men into this perfect freedom of mutual service.

XI

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the foregoing chapter we saw that God's beginning of the redemption of mankind consists in the work of Christ, who founded the Kingdom of God, and died to demonstrate God's love. We now proceed to discuss how that Kingdom is established in the earth, how men are redeemed from their bondage to sin and selfishness, and set free in the service of God. We consider first Christian experience in the individual, and then the Consummation, when the reign of God shall be established in the world.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

When a man sees the Love of God in Christ he is won. His resistance crumbles. As far as he is concerned the revolt is ended. Not that he then at once attains to perfect unity with God and his fellows. He does not. Habits, misconceptions and false ideals still hinder his progress. And therefore it is necessary that everyone should exercise his mind to discover and put into practice the

true ideals. But he has set his feet in the way of salvation, and is on the path that leads to perfect life. For while redemption is God's act, the work of His love, it is also and as necessarily man's work. His advance towards its completion is conditioned by, in fact consists in, his attitude towards God and man. This attitude to God is primarily faith and secondarily love. To man it is primarily love and secondarily faith.

(i.) *Man's attitude to God.*

The writer to the Hebrews suggests as the irreducible minimum of Theistic Belief that "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."* That is the beginning. We cannot even start the Christian life without that. But it is only a minimum. A real Christian faith is vastly more. As Jesus taught it, and as the saints have experienced it, *Faith means committing one's life entirely to God's keeping, and depending upon Him utterly.*

People complain that they have no faith, or that their faith is weak; and one gathers that it is often supposed that faith can be "worked up," that by right methods of psychical activity we can produce a state of mind, called faith, out of ourselves. But

* Hebrews xi. 6.

this cannot be done. Such "working up" of faith concentrates our attention upon our own state of mind,—a futile proceeding. But the very nature of faith is that it is not a concentration of attention upon ourselves, but upon God. Faith cannot be manufactured in us. It is a response to some one outside who is trustworthy. As sure as one recognises anyone to be trustworthy, one trusts him, one has faith; and the degree of that faith will be precisely the degree to which one recognises that he is trustworthy. For Faith is an attitude of one person produced by the influence exerted by the character of another person. A trustworthy character will always produce faith in others, provided that they fulfil two conditions. First that they look at the character and give it a chance to influence them. Secondly that they are sincere and straightforward with themselves. That they do not for example seek to explain away the influence which they feel. That is to say faith in God will come into us, or rise up in us, naturally when we see Him as He is. This is why Paul says that faith is the gift of God.* Not that He, so to speak, pours it into us, but that He shows us how trustworthy He is, so that, if we do not shut our eyes, faith naturally springs up in us.

From this it follows that lack of faith is to be cured, not by moaning over our own

* Eph. ii. 8.

deficiencies, nor by trying to galvanise ourselves into spiritual activity, but by attending to the revelation of God, by seeing Jesus Christ, by listening to the promptings of the Divine Love within us and in the lives of others. It is especially as we see God's self-sacrificing love, that faith springs up in utter devotion to Him. If we really grasped the meaning of Paul's words, "He that spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all," we should respond with the answer of faith, "How shall He not with Him freely give us all things,"* and without reserve commit our lives to Him. If we lack faith in God, the reason is that Paul's conviction, expressed in these words, is not truly ours. It is because we still doubt God's love that we withold our faith.

This faith in God implies an attitude towards the world. God is the controller of all things. The world is His. We must trust it too. But the world as we know it is in revolt against God. How then can we trust it? The answer is that our trust in the world has to be of much the same nature as our trust in ourselves; a trust in God's power to bring good out of evil. No man who has become conscious of his own sin and folly exactly trusts himself, yet if he continually and only mistrusts himself, if he is constantly tormented by doubt of his power to do right, he becomes

* Romans viii. 32.

utterly unstable and untrustworthy. When the salvation in Jesus Christ comes to such an one, one of its most marked effects is to restore self-confidence. He begins again to trust himself, but it is his better self that he trusts, and behind that better self is God. So too we are to trust the world, not over-looking the fact of its revolt, but certain that out of that revolt God will yet bring harmony and unity. As His allies we can trust ourselves with Him to the world, knowing that in alliance with Him all things will work together for good to us.

This does not mean that all things will be as we could wish them to be ; nor that we shall escape the pain and sorrow that we see around us in the world. For while the revolt of the world lasts, the consequences in suffering will be experienced to a greater or less degree by all men, and we cannot evade them. What it does mean is, that in union with God we shall be able to make the very best use of the world as it is, both for ourselves and others, and that we shall help Him in bringing it back to Himself and to perfection. Pain and sorrow may be our lot, yet our lot will be the happiest possible for us in the present state of the world, and we shall be sharing with God in His conquest of evil. Our suffering will be remedial and redemptive, not useless agony, like the suffering that comes by resisting God.

God can enable us to face every problem so as to solve it, or help towards its soution. In His company we can bring good out of evil every time. Because God is the supreme reality and God is good, however great the evil that confronts us, it can be overcome with good. We can, like Paul, be more than conquerors. For as we go with God, obstacles are not merely surmounted or brushed aside, they are transformed into the paving stones of the way of salvation. Evil is not merely overcome, it is turned into a minister of good.

But this faith in God is not only an attitude of mind. It is practical. It is not only or mainly passive. It is intensely active. It always must imply endeavouring to work for God's aim in the world by the methods which He has revealed to us in Christ. That is by the way of love. Looking back over our study, we see that our temptation to take the hard, cruel way of overcoming evil—vindictive punishment, repression and severity generally—depends upon a feeling that such action is stronger and more efficient than the methods of love and kindness. But the hard methods are not justified by results. And the method of love is God's method. Is not our use of the hardness a proof of lack of faith in God? If our minds were filled with God and His goodness, could we use cruelty, could we be vindictive? Is not our belief in such methods partly due to the fact that we have

set up in our minds a picture of God which is not a portrait of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and partly due to a childish pleasure in doing something that looks strong and effective? But if we would really be saved and help to save the world, we must see God as Jesus revealed Him, and trust Him with *child-like* confidence, not act towards others with *childish* petulance.

Our attitude towards God is summed up in the two words "trust" and "obey." It is no real trust that does not issue in obedience. If trust be the attitude of feeling towards God, obedience is the corresponding attitude of will. And it is in the work of action in the world, and amongst our fellow men, that our trust in God proves its reality. If we truly trust Him, we can meet the world and our fellow men with confidence, knowing that all will yet be well, and that our part in bringing good out of evil is to obey God, living in the world in the spirit of Jesus Christ our Master.

But trust and obedience are not the whole of our attitude to God. There arises out of them a yet deeper relationship, that of love. His self-sacrificing love to us awakens a response, not only of faith but also of love. And love means self-giving. God gives Himself to us without stint. We give ourselves entirely to Him. His purpose has no atom of selfishness in it. It is only and wholly the good of His creatures. And our love to

Him is proved by a like unselfishness produced in us. His purpose becomes our purpose. The response of love in us is not only love to God, but of necessity also love to man. Because the unlimited love of God has been felt by us, our narrow, short-sighted, selfish aims are transcended. Our hearts are open to all men because we are the sons of our Father.

(ii.) *Love to Men.*

And this brings us to the attitude of love to our fellow men. The word "Love" covers a great number of different degrees of interest in, and care for, men. The attitude to *all* ought to be of the same kind. The ideal of Christ is the family. The earthly family is the nearest approach to the universal family of God. As we have learned love in the life of a family, so we are to learn a wider love for all mankind, reckoning everyone a brother or sister in Christ, and a child of God. Yet even as we recognise our unity in love with all men, the unity with those nearest should continually increase, so that family affection ought still to lead in the progress of love. When the time comes that we love all men as brothers, we shall love our actual brothers still more. The growth of love in general means a growth of every particular form of love. Because here above all there is and can be no clash of interest. To love one

intensely makes it easier to love all, and to love all makes the love to each individual a deeper and truer thing.

This is so from the nature of love. From the negative side love is always the breaking down of selfishness. The circle of interest, which before was narrowed to our own immediate needs, is broken, and the needs of another receive a share of our interest. But because the circle is broken, interest may go out to others beside the one who first broke the circle.

We need in discussing love to get rid of sentimentality. The irreducible minimum of love is *not* some pleasant loving feeling in the individual, but a going out beyond oneself. Love as feeling is care for others ; as thinking it is interest in others, and as will and action it is unselfish working for and living for others. The pleasurable emotional state, which normally goes with love, is good when it is produced by this real care, interest and work for others, but where, as in the morbidly sentimental, the emotional state exists without a real self-giving, weakness of character is bound to result, and generally such states are harmful. It is unfortunate that the word love has been degraded by many people to signify merely the emotional state, instead of the total reaction of one personality upon another. Unless our love to men is expressing itself in respect for them, concern for their

welfare, and where possible, active doing of good, *it is not love at all, but sentimentality.*

Love, too, is an individual reaction. It has been said of some philanthropists that they loved humanity, but hated individuals. Theirs was not a true love. Far better that it should be said of us, as of Dr. Johnson, that he hated mankind in the mass, but loved every individual. For to love humanity is merely theoretical; to love an individual is practical. But there is no reason why we should not unite theory and practice, loving every individual with whom we come into contact, and at the same time recognising our unity with all mankind in theory. If we truly recognise our unity with all mankind, we shall naturally regard every individual as a brother and a possible friend, and treat him accordingly.

This is most intimately connected with our faith in God. For generally it is the interesting and sympathetic people who gain our love, and to the many we are indifferent, and some we even dislike. To overcome this tendency to indifference and dislike, an energy is required, which like the energy of faith, cannot simply be pumped up out of our inner consciousness. It must be the response to a stimulus of love. It is profoundly true that "We love, because He first loved us." Our response of love flows out to God, when we realise His love; and flowing out to Him, it reaches also our fellow men. As the love of

God in Christ impresses us, we see in every one a brother for whom Christ died, and we love him.

This means that the practical side of dedication to the love of God is dedication to the love of our fellow men. Our life, our work may never be regarded as a merely individual affair. It belongs to our brothers too. Our good is unattainable apart from their good. This has a most practical consequence in our attitude towards the necessary work of the world. In the far past the impulse to work came from the sheer drive of necessity. If a man would not work there was nothing for him to eat. And this sheer necessity always remains in the background. But it is no longer the most prominent factor in our modern world. Allied with it is competition, the desire to do better than another, to gain at his expense, to profit through him. In most of its developments this is contrary to the spirit of love. Yet it is extolled by many as the great incentive to industry, and the producer of efficiency. Probably it has often stimulated the lazy to activity, as has the drive of necessity. But to say it produces efficiency is meaningless, unless we have in mind an aim for which it is making. It has lately produced remarkable efficiency in the destruction of human life. But if the aim of man is the development of mankind, and the

promotion of human co-operation, such efficiency was the reverse of efficiency.

If we are to gain true efficiency in the real aim of humanity we must replace competition by a truer motive. We must no longer be driven by necessity from behind. That is an impulse of fear. Nor must we be led onward by the stimulus of the race. That tends to breed hatred. Our motive power must be the ideal that lies before us. In all our work our motive must be the establishment of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Love upon earth. To work for that is to express true love to our fellow men and true devotion to God. And so Love is our motive power in the whole of our work for the Christian Ideal. And love is from God. And in following this way of life we may have trust in our fellow men. For the Kingdom of God on earth, the rule of love, is the one aim which is entirely in accord with the nature of things and the true nature of man. Not in antagonism but in co-operation do men find their good. And as sure as God is Love, the interests of men, groups and nations do not clash. This means that we are to seek the good, not by way of painful compromise, not by a bargained give and take, each surrendering something good, and in return gaining another good; but by way of better understanding, truer insight and fuller dedication, knowing that the real goods are all to gain, and what is to

be surrendered is only delusion. And so, even as reformers, and we shall be the most radical of reformers, we are to have no antagonism.

We stand against no interest of anyone, but in the interests of all. We approach everyone, with the plea that he will join us in the search for truth, assuring him that truth cannot but be in the interests of all. And that life according to truth is the only true life, and is the life for all. Our message is a message of Comprehension, for God is Love. The true life is the life of equality, of partnership, of friendship and service. He who oppresses, and gains in riches by the oppression of his brothers, may gain the world, but loses his life—not only his soul in the world to come—he loses the real value of life now. He who hates and fears and protects himself against his fellow man, great and powerful though he may think himself, is really poor and blind.

Whether to the poor and oppressed, or to the rich and powerful, and even to the snobbish and pharisaical, the message is one, and it is equally and only to their interest to receive it and to live it. For the Kingdom of God is the all inclusive aim of man. And the only life to live is a life of trust in God and love to men. Only as we take that aim and live that life can the true interests of any be attained, because at the same time, and by

the same means the interests of all are attained.

It is this that explains why the methods of working for the Christian Aim, which have been set forth in this book, are so very different from the way of the world. If the Clash of Interest, which dominates the present world-order were the fundamental fact of the world, then the only way for the individual, group or nation to gain his own ends, would be by the methods of intolerance, domination, vindictiveness, and so-called retributive justice, for these ends could only be attained at the expense of other people, and any universal aim, anything in the nature of harmonious development of mankind, would be simply impossible. And it would be as impossible that God could be revealed to us in Jesus Christ. The God of such a world would be the creator of strife and confusion, not the Father of Love. But if Jesus Christ really shows us God, then the clash of interests is delusion, and the way of love is in the nature of things. It is the rational, and finally the only possible way, of bringing good out of the present evil state of the world. But the way of love and identity of interest, because it is the contrary of the world's way, clearly implies contrary methods for its working out in practice. And these are just those methods which we have set forth in the foregoing chapters.

The way may be hard, but that is solely due to the contradiction of sinners against themselves. And even this contradiction is diminished, if we deliberately take the way of comprehension and illumination, which is the way of Christ, instead of working for co-operation by the method of antagonism, which is the foolish and futile way of many reformers.

When we are tempted to the way of antagonism, it is because we are lacking in the love for which we are working, and have a feeble hold on the truth for which we stand. Every use of coercion and cruelty in the cause of truth displays a real distrust of truth, and a practical disbelief in the God of Love. The weapons of truth are persuasion and love, and these are the strongest there are. But these weapons are not our own to assume or put off as we like. We only have them as we live in communion with God, Who is Truth and Love.

THE CONSUMMATION

Sometime the strife will be over, and God will be the Ruler of all men. The bondage of selfishness will be exchanged for the liberty of love. The delusion of clash of interest will pass away, and men will find all their good in one another and in God. The Kingdom of God will have come. But God's

Kingdom is His family. He is not King, but Father. Therefore the coming of the Kingdom *cannot* be by an outward act of might. It can only be by His winning the allegiance of His wayward sons. It will be God's doing, because it will be entirely the work of His love. Yet it will be man's doing too, for it can only come as man responds to that love.

It may come slowly, or it may come suddenly. It may still be far off, or it may be very near. But come it must, for it is in the nature of things ; it is the will of God. Obviously it is the duty of every Christian to pray for and work for the coming of the Kingdom. And, if we are to follow the teaching of our Lord, this prayer and work is to be our whole activity* ; the Kingdom is to be the one aim of our lives, in which all that is good is contained, and apart from which there is no real good. But if we are setting all our desires upon the coming of God's Kingdom, it is impossible to avoid speculating as to how and when it will come. Jesus Himself said, "The Kingdom cometh not with observation." And He spoke of it as a growing organism, as seed, germinating and growing ; as yeast, leavening a mass of dough. On the other hand He spoke of a

* This does not mean concentration on so-called religious work to the neglect of the necessary work of life. It means doing the latter with a universal aim and in a universal spirit.

sudden coming of the Kingdom, of something that should be known all over the world, of a coming "of the Son of Man on the Clouds of Heaven." On the face of it these two expectations sound contradictory. How can it be a quiet growth, without outward show, and at the same time be a manifest, visible event, known to all the world?

The fact that God wins His Kingdom by love is the solution of this, as of many other problems. God will triumph, outwardly and visibly, and His triumph will be everywhere recognised. But His triumph will be founded upon Love. It will take place because all men have surrendered to Love. And it will consist in the reign of Love in every life. But this means that the outward and visible signs of His victory, will follow upon the inward and spiritual fact of the conversion of mankind.

The parables of growth and permeation are seen to mean that it takes time for man to grasp this great message of God's love. The love is sown, but not at once does the response of love spring up. The leaven is there, but it takes time to permeate the whole mass. But when the mass is permeated, when the corn is in the ear, then something new happens; the process is complete, the looked-for end has been achieved, the Kingdom has come. And so throughout these nineteen centuries the Gospel of God's grace has been slowly

permeating the minds of men. The process has been extraordinarily slow. For the fields are not as ready as they ought to have been, and tares have been sown amongst the wheat. The Jews, who were the most capable of all nations of grasping what Jesus really meant, rejected Him. They would not rise to the newer and truer light which He brought. And the obstacles of wrong thought, wrong life, political and philosophical custom and prejudice, which filled the Graeco-Roman world, again prevented a quick apprehension of the Gospel. And then, when Christianity was accepted, Orthodoxy and Order dominated men's minds instead of Love and Life, and the consequence was that Europe held its treasure of the Gospel to itself for long ages, scarcely even recognising its value, much less passing on the priceless blessing to others. And along with this went the terrible misrepresentations of God, which many professing Christians have believed in. While this state of things lasted how could God's Kingdom come?

But now the false order of the world crumbles before our eyes; mere orthodoxy has no compelling power, for men demand life; the old ideas of a cruel, revengeful and vindictive God are becoming incredible, and men ask for a God of love, or none at all. And to this waiting and sorrowing world is coming a new realisation of Jesus, and a new

grasp of what He meant, and a new vision of the God of love Whom He sets forth. And the Gospel is being preached to all nations. The slumber of self-sufficiency is over, and men are beginning to grasp the fact that Christ's message is for the whole world, and that it needs the minds of all men fully to work out all its implications.

And so again as of old, " the time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand." It remains that there should be raised up prophets who will carry the message of repentance and belief in the Gospel to the whole world. The Gospel is the Gospel of Jesus, old yet ever new, the Good News that God is Love and Light and Life ; that He is the Father of all men. And that in consequence all men are brothers, and that there is a fulness of life for all, if they will but adopt God's Ideal as their aim, and take His way to attain it, relying upon the motive power of His love to carry them through. And this, of course, carries with it the conviction that all envies, hatreds, antagonisms, suspicions and strifes are foundationless folly. For the interests of all men are common interests, that can only be attained by co-operation and love to one another, and by trust in their Father and God.

If this became the faith of the world, a great change, with results in every sphere of life, would come about. And the repent-

ance which Jesus preached is simply the adoption of this faith, the change of mind from wrong thoughts of God and man to the belief in Identity of Interest. It is no piecemeal change, a little here and a little there, nor is it something mysterious and marvellous, apart from human co-operation ; some strange intervention of an unreckonable God. It is one simple, straightforward, rational alteration of mind, a change from self-contradictory and paradoxical superstitions to a clear, simple and true faith in God and man.

It is simple, but its results will be felt in every region of life. And because it is so simple, and so manifestly true, when once it is proclaimed with utter conviction, men will accept it, and in friendship with God and man, live it. And this can easily happen suddenly. It is the unnecessary and often untrue complications of Christianity, which have delayed its progress. When it is stripped of these it can be seen and accepted far and wide. And the revolution of human thought, feeling and action that will follow will be astounding. It will be as if the heavens were opened and all men saw Jesus, the one true man, and the one true representative of God, standing on the right hand of God. "Then shall all the kindreds of the earth wail because of Him," as "they look upon Him Whom they pierced." For they will see that in rejecting Him they rejected God, and set

their own feet in the pathways of death. And that will be the judgment of the world, a judgment of every individual in his own heart in the presence of truth. And such a judgment, because it is a self-condemnation, must be the beginning of repentance and life. The old delusion, mistrust and sin, will be seen for what they really are, and the truth of God will be accepted. Then indeed "in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." The willing adoration of every soul, manifested in a perfect dedication of life to Him, who is above all things, will mark the ushering in of a new age, in which the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our God and His Christ, and He shall reign on the earth.

And that reign of God, because it follows the victory of Love, can be no reign of might imposed from without; it must be the reign of Love that works within. Men have in times past thought of the Kingdom of God as like the Empires of this world, the rule of despotic power. But surely the very phraseology which has been interpreted in this sense was really intended to emphasise its difference from such earthly empires. "The Son of Man on the Clouds of Heaven," means not a heavenly sovereign ruling by earthly methods, but a heavenly sovereign, whose coming and reign shall both be not of the earthly, but of the heavenly order. And what

can be more truly the heavenly order, than the inward order, founded upon and expressing love. For love is of God, and the rule of love is the rule of God, a rule not imposed from without, like imperfect human rule; but a rule perfect, because inwardly controlling the thoughts and purposes of every heart.

The Kingdom of God must be a Kingdom within, a reign in each individual, a complete dedication of each life to God, and a perfect guiding of every individual by the indwelling Spirit of God. It will be the Kingdom of God, because in every life He will reign as completely as He reigned in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the first-born among many brethren.

It will be the Son of Man coming on the clouds of Heaven, for at last men will see that Jesus is God, and that His way is God's way, and the world will be united together in Him. But He cannot come till we will have Him. May the prayer of every heart be:

"Even so come Lord Jesus."

APPENDIX

The Divine Omnipotence.

Perhaps it is necessary briefly to state the view of the Omnipotence of God, which lies behind the argument of this book.

God's omnipotence is generally supposed to consist in the unlimited power of irresistible coercive force. This is unsatisfactory. If it were such, human freedom would be a delusion, and God would Himself be directly responsible for all the evil in the world. Furthermore, such an irresistible power of coercion, if it existed, would work upon matter, and produce results in the material sphere alone.* It could not change the inward intention, the will and the thought. It would be exterior to personality. That is to say that, however outwardly irresistible it might be, it would not be omnipotent. But the revelation of God in Christ shows us that God's purpose for us is not only that

* An irresistible coercive *spiritual* force is a contradiction if it means the determination of the will apart from its consent, or the determination of a person's reason apart from a personal conviction of truth, for in both cases the will and the reason are regarded as substantial "things," which are moved as matter is moved. We therefore hold that the term "spiritual" involves freedom and insight into truth, and this is why an irresistible coercive force can only obtain in the sphere of the material.

we should do good, but that we should do good because we freely choose it, seeing by our own insight that it is good, for this is what is involved in really believing in Jesus Christ —believing in what He is and in that for which He stands. Coercive force is impotent to achieve this purpose. We then assume, not only that God does not use coercive force upon His human children, but that such a force is not, and cannot be, omnipotent. For it cannot compel the spirit of a free being.

Is there any other principle of action, any other power, that can produce the desired result? At first sight one seems compelled to give a negative answer. A free being cannot be compelled. That is true, but it does not mean that the opposition between God and free beings is complete and final. If the aim of God be, as it must be, entirely good, entirely in accord with reason and the true nature of man; if God's will is simply and solely the perfect good of all His children, a good which implies injury to none and development to all; then the revelation of His purpose, and the demonstration and experience of His love, must tend to bring human beings into line with that purpose, and that not by overriding or destroying the will, but by enlightening, convincing and enlisting it. Thus in the end, as truth prevailed over falsehood, every one would

come to recognise his own real good in the will of God; and he would desire to follow that will. His old rebellious habit might form a chain difficult to break, and his will might be wavering and weak; but when once he recognised and experienced that God's will meant for him, and for everyone, life, joy, and full development, he could no longer wish to resist it. Moreover his weakness and the strength of bad habit could and would be overcome by the power of the Divine Friendship, by the new environment of the love of God. Thus in two ways God's love is seen to be in the end omnipotent. When anyone really sees it he can no longer desire to oppose God. He longs to do God's will. And the experienced love of God is, as the testimony of every "converted" sinner proves, the greatest possible transforming force. It changes character. But this force of love, this real Divine omnipotence, does not override the human will. It works through it and develops it. The omnipotence of God is then, at any rate as far as human beings are concerned, simply God who is perfect Love, manifesting Himself through Love.

For a fuller treatment of this subject the reader is referred to the Rev. W. Fearon Halliday's book in this Series, *Reconciliation and Reality*.

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